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THE WELDING

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THE WELDING

By

LAFAYETTE McLAWS

Author of "When the Land Was Young," "Maid of Athens," etc.

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Published October, 1907

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Electrotyped and Printed by C. H. Simonds & Co.
Boston, U. S. A.

TO THE MEMORY OF

MAJOR GENERAL LAFAYETTE McLAWS, C. S. A.

"That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

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THE WELDING

BOOK ONE

WHICH DEALS WITH CONDITIONS

CHAPTER I

IN THE OLD SOUTH

IF the real life of a child begins with its first distinct train of recollections David Hamilton's began on a certain spring morning in the year 1845. At that period of our history cotton ruled as King in the South and the cotton planters dwelling in their spacious country homes surrounded by their slaves were lords.

They had their town houses, to be sure, just as they had everything else conducive to their pleasure, but they seldom used them except as stopping places when making their annual trips abroad or when they ran in between whiles to attend to some business or do a little shopping. A season in town was looked upon as far from desirable, for, besides necessitating the curtailment of the regular retinue of servants and other items of comfort, there was the not altogether congenial association with the professional classes, perhaps even with tradespeople. In that period, be it understood, the social classes were as distinctly divided as the rungs of a ladder.

On the top round of this social ladder were the families of the cotton planters. Next below, very little below, but still below, were the representatives of the

army and the navy, who could not hope to attain the desired rung with a rank less than that of captain. On the second round down were the lawyers, who could reach the wished for goal by way of the Supreme Bench or the Senate. Fourth in order was the ministry from which only by the bishop's mitre could the space to the top round be passed. Beneath these, a decided step beneath, came the doctors. From this rung there was no way of passing up, though one occasionally heard of the daughters of cotton planters who married into that profession, just as they sometimes married the sons of overseers. On the round below the doctors began the tradespeople, headed of course by the chief servant of the king, the cotton-merchant. From here they dropped, rung by rung, and there was none that ranked below that merchant of human flesh, the negro-trader. Thus at the top of the ladder we see the slave-owner, at the bottom, the very bottom, the slave-dealer. Such were the social classes in the Old South.

It had been an unusually wet season and the Savannah river, fed by streams from the mountains, had come roaring down a tawny flood. It forced Twiggs' Dead River, which is really nothing more than a back-water, over its banks, until all the low-grounds were covered and its foaming edge swished through the branches of the trees high up on the side of the hill that forms the bluff in the fork of the two rivers and on the top of which was the Hamilton cabin.

It had been raining for nearly a week, first a steady downpour, then a mist, then a steady downpour again, until one night there came a rush and a roar that awakened the occupants of the cabin on the bluff. As David lay listening, thrilled by the sound, he heard his father say to his mother:

"Thar's a-goin' to be a freshet. When the ole Savanny bellers like that, it means flood."

The next morning David followed his father out to the edge of the bluff and looked down at the leaping yellow waters that swirled below.

"Dead River'll be over hit's banks in less'n an hour, sonny," Hamilton told him. Then they went back to the cabin and put up the fishing tackle which they had repaired and made ready for use the night before.

Soon after breakfast was over David and his father yoked the ox to its cart and going down to the low-grounds brought back a load of wood and a great armful of fresh cane tops. The wood was added to the pile at the back of the house, and the cane tops, as extra provender until the water subsided, were thrown into the little rail pen which served the ox as a stable. After his father had gone back into the house, David climbed up into the crotch of the short-leaf pine that grew on the edge of the bluff, its gnarled branches bending out over the river.

This was his first freshet. He had seen high water often but nothing like the leaping flood that swirled beneath him. The steady roar stirred his blood, awakening a restless discontent, an indefinite longing, such as he had never known before. He sat in the tree-top, dangling his legs and staring down at the logs and uprooted trees as they swept past him, wondering where they would stop and wishing that he might go with them. His eyes turned down to the low-grounds and he saw his father's prediction come true. The water of Dead River crept over its banks. First it broke into a multitude of little streams that went racing with each other through the underbrush and across the clearing. Then they swept together, forming one solid sheet, that, as it rose higher, chafed against the side of the hill with a sound that seemed an echo of the river's roar. He watched the mist come out from the fringe of oaks and cypress in the bottoms; it was like gigantic sprays of swamp moss, and it waved and beckoned to him as it settled in the hollows and crept up the hill. It had almost reached the fence of their little clearing when his mother came to the door of the cabin and called him to dinner.

For two days the river continued to rise, then the sun burst from under the clouds and at the end of the week

the water had disappeared from the bottoms, leaving a deep coat of mud on the ground and yellow circles high up on the trunks of the trees. James Hamilton took out his fishing tackle again and every day thereafter at sundown David helped put out the long stretches of trot-lines and sink the fish-baskets, and at dawn helped draw them in again. At first there were only perch and brim with a cat-fish or two and an occasional jack, but soon there came a morning when both baskets and lines were heavy with large silvery fish. That morning David, with a glow of pride, watched his father set out for Augusta, his bateau loaded with the first shad of the season. On his return that night he brought a sack of salt in the bottom of his bateau and as long as the big fish stayed in the river David was kept busy helping his mother salt down into large barrels all his father could not take to market.

At last a day came when the lines were light and the baskets almost empty, — a few brim, a handful of perch and one sucker. Hamilton explained to his son that the shad had gone back to the sea and would not return until the next year. While the air was still chill the sun was warm and a shimmer of green covered the ground and the tree-tops. Spring had come, and every bursting bud and blade of grass leaped to meet it.

The craving in David's heart became a summons, a call that compelled an answer. One morning, after watching his father paddle up the river on his way to Augusta, he whistled to the old setter dog and ran down the hill to the low-grounds. Following the overgrown wagon road that skirted Dead River he came to the lower ford. Here he took his seat on the bank and gazed wistfully across the river, where the road, after surmounting the opposite bank, disappeared between the long straight rows of the cotton-field beyond.

It was only a rough country road, leading from his father's little strip of land, through the Greenwood river plantation, to the public road two miles away, but to David it was the entrance into that great, mysterious world which he longed to see and understand.

With the exception of monthly trips down the river to Shady Grove, the Methodist meeting-house, only once before could he remember ever to have been so far away from the cabin on the bluff. Last summer he had come here, had stood with his mother just where he now sat and watched his father paddle across the river and, walking up the road on the opposite bank, set out on his yearly rounds to repair the gins of the neighboring plantations.

The bees buzzed around the yellow jasmine that hung in festoons from the branches over his head. A mocking bird was singing in the top of the sweet-gum tree against which he leaned. A flock of fly-up-the-creeks were stalking about in the shallow water near the bank and the cry of the old setter, running rabbits, filled the bottoms, but the boy neither saw nor heard. He was thinking of the fine people, the fine houses and the glorious fox hunts which his father had told about on his return from that trip. The sun came above the trees, then, rising higher, grew warm, but still he sat staring across the river and down that rough country road.

Suddenly his heart jumped to his throat. Then he bent forward drawing his eyes to a squint. From a cloud of dust down the road he made out two horses coming rapidly towards him. A few minutes later a green wagon, perched high on springs, with a negro driver and three white men, drew up and stopped on the opposite bank. With the instinct of a wild thing to see without being seen, David moved into the gall thicket.

The white men left the wagon and walking down to the water's edge stood talking. Two were tall, broad and full about the middle, but it was the little man who interested the boy most. He watched him strutting up and down the bank, flourishing a white umbrella and ordering the negro about.

"That's the way with a runt," said David, speaking to himself and bobbing his head up and down in emphasis. "They al'ays make more fuss than the biggest pig in the litter."

One of the tall men went out in the bateau with the negro and David watched his gay-colored fly skimming along the top of the water, eager to see it bob under and the first trout drawn out. He had heard his father say there was good trout fishing around the lower ford and before the arrival of the strangers he had seen the fish jumping, but when he saw the negro dig his paddle in and splash the water about he shook his head and wrinkled his forehead disapprovingly. Then he started to his feet — the fly had bobbed under and been pulled down deep with a rush. The negro, excited, dug his paddle into the water and the boat turned completely around. When the fisherman drew his line in, both fish and hook were gone.

"Make that nigger keep his paddle out of the water."

The white man stared up at the little figure on the bank, the oath that had started to his lips silenced by his surprise. The negro was the first to speak.

"Dar now!" he exclaimed, grinning up at David. "I 'low you thinks you kin paddle better'n me?"

"I kin," David answered. "I ain't no fool."

The fisherman roared with laughter, but to David there was nothing to laugh about. To him the loud laughter and the splashing of the water were all of a piece. He stood on the bank with his hands in his pocket, staring down at them and frowning.

"Well, you come and paddle for me and I'll pay you," the white man called up to him.

"You mought, an' then agin you moughtn't," David replied coldly.

Again the white man roared with laughter. David's eyes flashed. He pushed his hands deeper in his pockets and turned to walk off.

"Oh, come now," the fisherman said persuasively. "If you will paddle me about, I'll give you a shilling for every fish I catch and a thrip for every bite."

"Give yo' money t' yo' nigger," David called back indignantly. "I don't hire to white trash."

He drew his knife from his pocket and started down the road, whittling a stick and deaf to all the induce-

ments offered by the fisherman. Before he had gone far the bay of a hound stopped him. It was like the note of a bell, deep, mellow and sonorous. The effect on the boy was curious. It was like the call of a primitive instinct, and he turned in answer to it, every fibre of his little body thrilled and his eyes suffused with tears. His father was the best trainer of hounds in the county, as his father had been before him. They had each in turn served the owners of the land on which the boy now stood, and the hounds, like their owner and their trainer, were descendants from stock brought over from Merrie England in the days when Georgia was a colony ruled by fashions, as well as governors, approved in the mother country.

David stopped, searching the cotton-fields with his eyes and hoping to get a glimpse of the dogs. It was not the hunting season and he knew the pack were out only for an airing, but he longed to see them. He felt sure he could call each dog by name, so often had he heard his father describe them. There was not a moving thing in sight, only the long straight cotton-beds, each with its line of silvery green down the middle, and the rough dusty country road trailing through the field.

He glanced down at the two men on the other side of the river. The little one seemed very busy. He had brought two large baskets from the wagon and set them beside a little spring that gurgled from a stratum of white clay a few feet to one side of the road. David saw that the flat basket was full of bottles and that the little man sank them all one by one in the spring, pushing them so deep into its clayey bottom that the water was clouded. The other basket he set carefully in the shade under a bay tree, then, raising his white umbrella and picking up a gay-colored shawl and his fishing-pole, he went down to the water's edge where the large man sat fishing. David stared down at him, watched him spread his shawl, take his seat on it under the shade of his umbrella, then drop his hook into the river. With a grunt of contempt the little boy once more turned towards home.

The bay of the hound sounded again and his bare feet stopped as though suddenly rooted to the ground; for across the ford, just where the road dipped from the cotton-field down the river bank, stood the hound — big, black and gaunt, with liver ears, and a liver vest extending between her legs and under her belly. It was Vic, the leader of the Greenwood pack. David knew her the instant his eyes lighted on her.

The next moment the road was full of hounds, trotting down towards the river. Vic with the pack at her heels turned aside to the spring. David saw them nose the lunch basket, push the top off and begin a snarling struggle. The little man dropped his fishing-pole and, clubbing his umbrella, rushed up the bank swearing like a sailor. He beat and kicked the hounds and as Vic made off with a baked chicken he ran and caught her by the tail. At their leader's yelp of pain the pack turned on her persecutor. They swarmed around him, between his legs, toppled him sprawling into the road, and Vic, seizing the chicken, again ran off.

"Bully fer you, ol' Vic!" David shrieked, bent almost double with delight. "Bully fer you!"

At the sound of the boy's voice, the little man struggled to his feet and turned towards him.

"You little devil," he cried fiercely, shaking his fist at David. "Just come where I can lay my hands on you. I'll teach you how to set your starving feists on a gentleman."

David only laughed the louder, bending over and pressing his hands hard against his sides. Then the little man ran down to the edge of the water.

"Come over here," he yelled, fairly dancing with rage. "Come over here; I dare you to come over here."

"No, you come over here," David answered, grinning and rubbing his thighs. "You dance like a kildee; you oughter know how to fly." Then he threw his hands over his head in a very ecstasy of delight. "Go it, Houston!" he shouted to a black and white hound, as it trotted across the road with the remnants of ham between its jaws. "Watch out, Mit! Take care, Fry!" he added

in shrill warning, as the little man ran back towards his rifled lunch basket. "Look out, dogs, he'll hurt ye — he's got spurrers on his shanks — he's — "

He stopped dumbfounded. There across the ford, just where he had first seen Vic, sat her master on horseback. David never forgot that picture, the gallant, dominating figure of the rider as he sat for a moment motionless, taking in the scene. Then he moved in his saddle.

"I'll be damned," shot from his lips, and he dashed down the bank and springing from his horse was in the midst of the fight.

Next David saw a shining foot and leg shoot out. The little man spread out like a leather-wing bat, came sailing through the air, over the hounds and the bushes, and falling into the river went down like a stone.

"My God, Dick," the big fisherman cried, as he ran panting up the bank. "Telly can't swim a lick. He'll drown. I tell you, Dick, he'll drown."

The young man turned and looked the big fisherman calmly over. Then, without a moment's hesitation to remove coat, boots, and hat, he sprang into the river and struck out for the struggling figure amid-stream.

He caught the little man as he went under the second time. When he got him on shore he shook him as David had seen the old setter shake a rat. Then he stood him up on his feet.

"I pulled you out this time," he said, and he shook his fist in the little man's face. "But, damn you, I want you distinctly to understand, if ever you strike one of my hounds again, I'll see you in hell first."

Without more ado he whirled himself into his saddle, and, winding the silver-tipped cow's horn that hung over his shoulder, turned his horse's head and rode up the bank, followed by the pack. David watched him ride down the dusty road, become a blurred point, then disappear. With an unconscious sigh he turned and set out for the cabin on the bluff. At last he knew what he wanted. He wanted to go with that man, to be like that man.

When his father returned from town that night David told him of his visit to the ford, of the fishing party, the kick into the river, the rescue, and everything just as it had happened. James Hamilton slapped his long legs and roared until the rafters of the cabin seemed to shake.

"I wonder when Dick Fulton got back from Europe," he speculated, as soon as his mirth had subsided. "Fust chance I git I'll go down an' tell 'im howdy. I al'ays feel lonesome when that boy's out the county."

"How do you know it was Decatur Fulton, Jamie?" his wife asked. "Davie never heard nobody name his name."

"Goddlemighty, Nanny," Hamilton cried, and he began to laugh again, "jes' the same way I know that thar little feller wus Tel Tutwyler. Thar ain't nary nother man in the State o' Georgy but Decatur Fulton that'd kick a man in the river fer mistreatin' his dogs an' then spile his clothes a-jumpin' in to pull 'm out. Jes' so thar ain't nary nother damned fool but Telemachus Tutwyler, that'd set on the river bank a-fishin' an' holdin' an umbrill over hisself."

"Who's Telemachus Tutwyler, daddy?"

"Sto'-keeper in Augusty, sonny. A little furren counter jumper from up north! He didn't have enough money to buy hisself a secon' chaw o' tobacco when he fust come here. Sence he married old man Jim Wallace's gal an' kin count on gittin' the ole man's money, he acks like he owns the whole yarth with a good big mortgage on hell. Ye didn't take him fer a gentleman, did ye?"

"No," David answered contemptuously. "The minute I sot eyes on 'em, I knowed they wusn't nothin' but white trash."

Hamilton lifted his hand and turned towards the door, listening.

"Jest a hoot-owl, honey," Nancy assured him. "I've been a-hearin' 'em 'round here most every night this spring. I reckon they've got a nest close by."

Hamilton shook his head. He looked at David. The boy's face showed alert and tense in the firelight.

"What did you think it wus, sonny?"

"Man er nigger; 'twant no hoot-owl."

Hamilton nodded approvingly. Taking a chunk of blazing lightwood from the fire, he strode across the cabin and threw open the door.

"Did somebody holler?" he called, flashing the light of the torch towards the gate.

"I wished to inquire if you could give us shelter for the night," a man's voice answered, and Hamilton, lowering his torch, found the speaker at the side of the doorstep, almost under his elbow.

"How did you git here?" he demanded, after he had looked the man over, his honest blue eyes grown stern with suspicion.

"We came out for a walk and not being thoroughly acquainted with the country lost our way. We —"

"Who's with ye?"

"My wife and little girl," the man replied, motioning towards the fence.

Without another word Hamilton stepped from the door and, striding down the path, threw open the narrow front gate.

"Walk right in, ma'am," he said, speaking to the tired woman he found waiting outside, with a sleeping child in her arms. "We hain't got nothin' fine, but sech as it is ye're welcome." He took the child from her arms and as he led the way in he called to his wife: "Nanny, here's yo' new neighbor, the lady who's moved in at the old Baldee place, come t' see you."

"Ah, then you have seen us before?" the stranger exclaimed. He was a slender, intellectual looking man with the eyes of an enthusiast. His scrupulous neatness and the way he wore his clothes gave him an appearance almost of elegance.

Before replying, Hamilton drew a rocking chair near the fire for the woman and placed the sleeping child in her arms. Then, turning and drawing his great gaunt body up to his full height, he looked down at his guest.

"No, I hain't never sot eyes on you afore to-night," he said. "The people 'round here don't pick up their words one by one an' polish 'em off neat an' clean afore they let 'em out their mouth, like you do. I didn't have t' use my eyes t' know you, stranger."

"My name is Herrick, Nathaniel Herrick."

"Well, I didn't hear yo' name, Mr. Herrick. I jes' heard a man from furren parts had moved in at the ole Baldee place. Soon's I heard you speak, I knew you wus that man."

"Yes," said Herrick, "I moved down from North Carolina on account of my wife's health. I've rented that place for a year, and expect to do a little farming, but I'm a school teacher by profession. I hear you need a teacher in this neighborhood." He glanced at David, who, overcome by a sudden shyness, had crept into the corner and was standing at the foot of the bed.

"Ye come from North Calliny?" Hamilton questioned.

"Yes, my wife's people have kept the tavern at Western for three generations. Her father, her grandfather, and her great-grandfather. They were —"

"Well, ef anybody had axed me whar you wus from — jes' from hearin' you talk — I'd a-said from Boston. I've knowed two men from up that a-way, both of 'em hired by the Colonel an' his sister, Mrs. Greenwood, to teach the school at Tupelo. You an' them is jest as much alike in yo' way o' talkin' as three peas in a pod." Without giving Herrick time to reply, he reached over and touched the little girl's mass of golden hair. "Hit's jest like fresh corn silk," he said to Nancy.

Nancy nodded approvingly and then remarked; "She's jes' about the prettiest little gal I ever set eyes on. What do you call 'er?"

"Her name is —" Herrick began, then hesitated and began again. "Her name is Dorothy, but we call her —"

"Her name is Annie Laurie," his wife interrupted. She was a meek, fragile-looking little blonde woman and gave one the impression of speaking always in

subdued tones. Now her voice was sharp enough. "She's named after the old song. I suppose you've heard it, — 'Her brow is like a snow-drift, her neck is like — '"

The little girl sat up in her mother's lap and looked at Nancy, smiling.

"I'll sing it for you," she said. She slipped down to the floor and made a courtesy, lifting her skirts daintily. Then she began:

"'Maxwelton's braes are bonnie,
Where early fa's the dew, — '"

She sang, and the notes came as from the throat of a bird. Her listeners sat spellbound. To the little boy it was the most wonderful thing in the world and the most beautiful picture, — the slender, graceful child with her mass of golden curls against the background of the ruddy firelight, framed by the rough mud chimney and the rude mantel with its festoons of red peppers and bunches of dried herbs. The very air about him seemed pulsing with the melody of her song. To get nearer he left his dark corner and crept out into the circle of the firelight.

"'— And dark blue is her e'e;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie,
I'd lay me doune and — '"

The song broke sharply off. For a moment the little girl stared into the boy's eyes; then, dropping her head, she ran and hid her face against her mother's shoulder, while David slipped swiftly back behind the bed and pressed his burning cheeks down among the cool pillows.

Hamilton laughed heartily and left his seat to drag the boy out again, but Nancy interposed.

"No, Jamie, no," she said, and Hamilton took his seat. "Davie scared the little gal. Let 'im be. The little boy's gone, honey." She placed her hand caressingly on the child's head. "Won't ye come an' finish yo' song now?"

"Yes, darling, come now, finish your song. Sing the last verse," Mrs. Herrick coaxed. "Then maybe the little boy will divide his supper with you."

"Why, hain't she had no supper?" Nancy exclaimed.

"Only the berries we picked in the swamp," the woman replied, throwing a defiant glance towards her husband.

"The fact is," Mr. Herrick explained, with an assumption of ease, "we've been living rather near for the last few days. Owing to a misunderstanding, the funds I have been depending on have not arrived as promptly as they should."

"Bless my soul," Nancy said, beginning to bustle about; "why didn't ye mention it when ye fust walked in? Ye needn't a-set here a-starvin'."

"Please don't trouble to —" Mrs. Herrick began.

"Put some wood on the kitchen fire, sonny," Hamilton interrupted, rising resolutely from his chair. "I'll go t' the dairy with ye, Nanny, an' git some fresh milk fer the little gal."

He strode across the yard to the little wooden cupboard that served as a dairy, shielding the flickering tallow-dip with one great brown hand. As Nancy filled a pitcher of fresh milk and selected a pan of clabber, he said to her:

"I don't like the way things look, honey. I'm afraid those folks 'aint all they should be."

"Ye don't think they stole that chile, do ye, Jamie?" She glanced up at him startled.

"No, the chile is theirs," Hamilton answered confidently. "Ye often see a difference between folks an' their children; but ef ever I seed an ungodly liar hit's that thar man. He didn't no mo' come from North Calliny than I did from the Lan' o' Canaan. Why didn't he holler at the gate like an honest man, 'stid o' mockin' a hoot-owl? An' when I went to the do', thar he wus right smack agin the side o' the house! Ef he wusn't a-listenin', then I'd jes' like t' know what he wus a-doin'."

CHAPTER II

DAVID MAKES A FRIEND

THE next morning, as David returned from piloting the Herricks to the public road, he met his mother coming down the hill.

"Did ye paddle 'em across Dead River, Davie?" she asked, halting as she caught sight of him.

"Yes'm, an' I led 'em a piece o' the way down the road so they couldn't git lost agin."

"Well, they left these," Nancy said, as she drew a pamphlet and several printed leaflets from the pocket of her homespun apron. "The minute I found 'em I sot out in hopes of overtakin' ye."

"Why, here's a picture," David exclaimed, opening one of the leaflets, "an' some readin' at the bottom. What does it say, mammy?"

Nancy shook her head. "I don't know, honey. I never had schoolin' enough to learn how t' read nothin' but the blue-back speller. When yo' daddy gits home to-night he kin tell ye, I reckon. Be sure ye don't hurt 'em, Davie. Remember they don't b'long to us."

That night as Hamilton sat before the fire, his legs crossed, his corncob pipe in his mouth, David put the papers on his knee and Nancy told how she had found them under the chair upon which Mr. Herrick had hung his coat the night before. Hamilton glanced at the papers; then, removing his pipe, he opened the pictured sheet and, holding it near the fire, bent over it. The next minute he straightened up quick, catching his breath.

"Well, I'll be damned," he muttered, staring at his wife.

"Why, Jamie," Nancy exclaimed, looking up from her work.

both alike, Moses in the bulrushes in yaller an' turkey red, with purple fillin' an' green cross-bars."

Allowing Hamilton to take the bag and quilting frame, she removed her flapping calico bonnet and stood for a moment fanning herself with it. David stared at her. She was taller than his father and even more gaunt. He felt sure her head was the reddest in the world and her face had more freckles on it than her old grey mare had flea bites on the whole of her raw-boned body. Then he glanced down at Mattie. The little girl smiled and he smiled back at her; Anno Domini caught them.

"Stop makin' eyes at that gal, boy! Fust thing I know she'll be that silly I can't git no sense out of her. She haint got nothin' but Dutch sense, nohow — took after her daddy — an' that's mighty hard t' keep in operation. Better be gittin' in that house an' cardin' them cotton bats, Mattie! Davie's got too much sense t' have a little gal fer his sweetheart, who don't know how t' work."

The little girl turned meekly towards the cabin, while David, his face on fire, fled through the gate and along the path to the river. On the edge of the bluff he glanced back. Mattie was standing in the door and her little square figure was near to blocking it. David thought of Annie Laurie. The contrast was too great. He shook his head and ran down the path to his father's bateau which lay drawn up on the bank, tied to the root of a tree.

An hour later, as they paddled up the river, he asked:

"What is edecated, daddy?"

"Why, sonny, hit's knowin' how t' read, an' write, an' cipher, an' — a whole passle o' things."

"What sort o' things?"

"Why, sonny —" Hamilton stopped. Laying the paddle across his knees, he spit into his hands, rubbed the palms together, dipped his paddle back into the water, then went on. "Well, sonny, a lawyer is edecated t' git people out o' trouble, a doctor is edecated t' git 'em well, a preacher is edecated t' make 'em live honest an' die happy, an' that's the way it goes. Some

is edecated fer one thing an' some fer another ; but then agin, some ain't edecated at all."

"Is Mr. Fulton edecated?"

"Why, bless my soul, sonny, thar ain't a better edecated boy in the State o' Georgy than Decatur Fulton, Mrs. Greenwood's grandson; an' don't ye know he's great-grandson of the ole gineral, Major-Gineral John Twiggs who fit in the Revolution? The Twiggs family is all edecated up t' the top notch."

"Then why ain't you edecated, daddy?"

"Because I was a po' man's son," Hamilton answered simply, his face grown suddenly serious.

The boy's paddle slipped back into the water, going under and coming up in quick clean strokes. They had covered more than a mile before he looked up again, his paddle trailing as be bent eagerly forward.

"Can't a po' man's son never git edecated?" he asked, his troubled eyes fastened on his father's face.

"Sometimes, sonny. Alec Stephens was a po' man's son; now he is one of the best lawyers in the country."

"How did he git edecated?"

"He larnt all he could when he wus a boy; then, when he grew up, some gentlemen lent 'im money t' go to college. When he finished college, he worked an' paid 'em back."

The boy drew a deep breath of relief and the straight red line of his lips relaxed. They were passing Sand Bar Ferry, now, and his father called his attention to the famous duelling ground on the Georgia side. He pointed out the exact spot on which a signer of the Declaration of Independence had stood when shot down by a Revolutionary general, the same spot where, only the year before, Hamilton himself had seen a gentleman fall dead, shot through the heart by the man who had insulted his beautiful young sister.

Then he told how the second had challenged the scoundrel there on the field and, standing at the side of his dead friend, had fired the shot that caused his enemy to die in agony a week later. David listened to the story, the blood running hot in his veins, and there arose

in his mind a vision — Annie Laurie was the beautiful, insulted girl and he, David Hamilton, the brave man shooting the scoundrel to death.

The Lower Market was a busy scene that day, but the men lifting great baskets of fruits and vegetables from the country wagons to the stalls, the butchers cutting their meats or nailing the hides of the freshly slaughtered animals against the front of the building, all had time to speak to Hamilton and call out a cheery greeting to the little boy.

A few of the earliest customers had arrived, gentlemen and ladies, each followed by a negro servant carrying a large covered basket. David helped spread the fish in the little stall next to the up town entrance. Then he took his stand in the corner and while fanning off the flies with the fresh persimmon bough watched everything that went on about him. Once, when his father was busy with another customer, he sold a bunch of small catfish to an old negro woman. Again, when he saw a gentleman glance their way, he pushed forward a fine trout and turned over a bunch of perch. The gentleman smiled and motioned to his servant to take the trout. As he handed David the money, he asked:

"What is your name, little man?"

"David Twiggs Hamilton," David answered, responding to his smile.

"Ah, indeed!" Then Mr. Beverly stepped to the entrance of the market and called: "Twiggs, my son, come here." A boy came in. He was a slender flaxen-haired boy, a shade taller than David, dressed in a full suit of white linen, with shining red-top boots and an ivory-handled riding whip. "Here is another namesake of General Twiggs, son," the gentleman said, motioning towards David. "He is Mr. James Hamilton's son."

"I am very glad t' meet you," the boy said, stretching his hand over the fish, and David saw that his eyes were as blue as Annie Laurie's.

"Howdy," he answered, returning the boy's grip.

"Where do you live?"

"Down the Savanny by the ford o' Dead River."

"At Buzzard's Roost?"

"No, 'cross the lower ford."

Twiggs Beverly nodded understandingly. "I know, I've been there fishing." Then he extended his hand again. "I see my father leaving; I'll have to go." When he reached the door, he stopped and called back: "The next time we go to the lower ford I'll come t' see you."

"I'll be mighty glad t' see ye," David answered, and he hoped the time would soon come.

When the last fish was sold, David followed his father up Broad Street to the great fountain where in those days men as well as beasts went to slake their thirst. Here, after washing their hands in the overflow from its rim and catching deep swallows from the falling streams, they turned to the left and walked, facing the Court House, across Ellis Street to Greene.

To-day people who have travelled the world over stop to admire Greene Street. It was even more beautiful then, the morning our little Georgia cracker planted his sturdy feet on the very spot where the Independence Monument now stands. Four rows of giant live oaks, their boughs touching, extended the entire length of the street, forming two broad, shaded driveways, with "the green," a narrow grass-covered park, between. The houses were spacious wooden or brick buildings, each set a dignified distance back in its own garden and surrounded by cedars, magnolias and blooming shrubs. There were few places which could surpass, in tranquil beauty, Greene Street on that bright spring morning.

A throng of fine people — elderly gentlemen in black with full ruffled shirts and high silk stocks wound about their necks, young gentlemen in flowing buff-colored trousers or full suits of white marseilles, ladies, old ladies and young ladies, wearing fine soft silks or delicately tinted muslins held out by great hoop-skirts, — was moving towards the court house, though they got no nearer than the yard. Once through the wide iron gate they moved leisurely about through the grove. The ladies seated themselves in groups under the trees

while the gentlemen threw themselves on the grass at their feet or, sauntering about, collected in little knots to smoke and talk politics. To David it was all like a glimpse of the heaven he had heard old preacher Perriman describe in his monthly sermons at Shady Grove, the few times when he was not too busy thundering against the wiles of the devil and everlasting damnation.

"Which is Alec?" he asked, touching his father on the arm after he had looked over the whole scene, glancing from group to group trying to pick out the wonderful man all these people had come to hear.

"He hain't come yet, sonny. When he does, he'll stan' right at the top o' them thar steps." Hamilton pointed to the broad stone steps which led from the brick walk to the door of the court house. "Ye kin go set on the steps if ye want to; but mind ye don't git lost."

So David climbed the steps slowly, watching for the coming of the great man. When he was within two steps of the top, three gentlemen appeared in the door of the court house, three gentlemen and a slender, sick-looking boy. At the sight of them the men in the grove began to shout and the ladies to wave their handkerchiefs and clap their hands. Then a strange thing happened.

The pale, sick-looking boy stepped forward and bowed, and the shouts and hand-clapping increased in vigor. The sick-looking boy smiled and bowed again; then, standing at the top of the steps, he began to speak. Because David had sharp eyes and a quick brain he did not need to ask who it was, a question which had been asked by many persons with older heads than his on their shoulders and which would be asked again until Alexander H. Stephens' hair was white and his slender frame bowed by age.

But could this shrill falsetto voice be what all these people, these fastidious gentlemen and ladies, had come to hear? David listened and was thrilled. The shrill voice became more musical; the slender figure

strengthened. The sick-looking boy, transformed by the power of his own eloquence, had become a strong man, a giant. The little boy seated at his feet felt the power of his eloquence through every fibre of his body, though he neither understood his words nor grasped the meaning of the thoughts he expressed. At length came words that he partly understood and they were branded on his memory for all time.

"I am no defender of slavery in the abstract."

There was a storm of groans and hisses. David's eyes flashed and he squared himself back against the railing, instinctively on the defensive for the speaker. Then there came applause, a single pair of hands clapping. They clapped with a will. Other hands joined them and the hissers were drowned out.

"Go on, Alec, and tell us why you voted to let Texas in." It was a tall gentleman with soft white hair flowing from under his Panama hat, and David saw that James Hamilton stood at his elbow.

The speaker went on: "Liberty always had charms for me —" and other words which had no meaning for the little boy seated on the steps, though he wrinkled his brow and listened with all his ears, applauding vigorously when the tall gentleman and his father set the example. When the speech was ended, he was one of the first to shake hands with the speaker.

"How are you, little man?" was Mr. Stephens' greeting. He had glanced down at David's earnest, intelligent face more than once during his speech.

"Tolluble, thank ye, sir," David answered. Then a mighty sympathy was born in his heart and shone in his face, and he added: "I hope ye feel better this mornin'."

"Yes, I'm feeling pretty well, thank you," Stephens replied. He was accustomed to have strangers comment on his frail appearance, and he liked the boy's honesty. "You must tell me your name."

"David Twiggs Hamilton, sir."

"Ah, you are named for a brave soldier. What are you going to be when you grow up? A soldier?"

David shook his head. "I want t' git edecated, ef I kin."

Stephens' eyes kindled. The craving in the boy's heart touched a chord in his own; he understood. "You can, little man, you can," he assured him promptly. "Be a good boy, and learn all you can. When you are older, come to me; I will see that you have an opportunity to get an education."

"Thank you, sir, I'll come." David nodded gravely as he moved away, pressed back by the crowd of eager hand-shakers.

His father was in the crowd, and also the tall gentleman who, as David knew the minute he laid eyes on him, was the old general's son, Colonel George Twiggs. David watched him speak to Stephens, saw his father introduced, and strained his ears to catch what they were saying. It was in vain; the court house portico was packed with both ladies and gentlemen, all talking and laughing, and more were coming up the steps.

Later, — he could not have told whether it was an hour or a minute, — he heard his name called and caught a glimpse of his father in the middle of the brick walk, moving towards the gate. He was struggling to push his way through the crowd, when strong hands laid hold of him and he was lifted over the banisters.

"Here he is, Hamilton," Mr. Decatur Fulton called, and David found himself standing on the ground at the side of the portico.

As he walked up Greene Street with his father and the colonel, he passed the handsomest residences in the city, though he might have been walking through the Greenwood cotton-field for all he saw of them. He was too busy thinking of Alec Stephens and the wonderful promise he had made. At the corner of McIntosh Street Colonel Twiggs halted and laid his hand on an iron gate which led through a high brick wall to a beautiful garden, now a mass of bright blossoms and neatly trimmed shrubs, in the midst of which was a great house with a long flight of stone steps. As his father turned towards Broad Street, David spoke.

"Did ye git 'im to read the papers?" he asked.

"Why, bless my soul, I was clean forgittin' it, Colonel!" Hamilton drew the leaflets from his pocket and explained how he had come by them.

Colonel Twiggs listened, pushed his hat back, rumpling his waving white hair; it was a way he had when troubled. Then he led the way in, up the paved walk, between the square boxed hedges, under the high stone steps, and into the cool office in the basement. Here he spread the leaflets out on the table, the pictured sheet first.

David soon understood enough of his explanation to know that it was a print from an engraving and that the beautiful tree with wide-spreading branches represented the tree of liberty. In the shade of this tree, at one time, a slave owner was luxuriously reposing, his slaves fanning him; at another, he was being carried forth in a palanquin, to view his half naked slaves in the cotton fields, whom the drivers with cruel looking whips were scourging to their tasks.

Next the colonel examined the little book.

"The Anti-Slavery Picknick," he read the name. He fluttered over a few pages, then read again. "Jefferson said: 'One day of American slavery is worse than a thousand years of that which we rose in arms to oppose.'"

"I've heard somethin' like that before," James Hamilton remarked, and he wrinkled his brow trying hard to think where.

"Yes," assented the colonel, "they printed it as a leaflet last year and sowed them broadcast through the South."

He ran over the headlines of the other papers. At last he exclaimed:

"'The Declaration in the Constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society: We maintain that no compensation should be given the planters for emancipating their slaves, because slavery is a crime and therefore not an article to be sold. We shall organize anti-slavery societies in every city, town and village in our land. We

shall spare no exertion nor means to bring the whole nation to repentance, whether we live to witness the triumph or perish, untimely martyrs, in the great, benevolent, and holy cause.'"

The colonel's hat had moved further back on his head and his white hair was badly tumbled. "Herrick told you he was a teacher, James? Well, I'll drive by the Baldee place and have a talk with him. If he seems an honest man and can give good references, I will speak to him about opening a school at Tupelo next fall. I have been corresponding with two or three others on the subject, but if this man really wants work and is competent, there is no need of going away from home."

"But suppose he's a nigger-stealer?" Hamilton objected. "Ye'll ax 'im about these papers, won't ye?"

David never forgot the sweetness of the colonel's smile.

"No, I think not. They may have been sent him through the mail just as similar leaflets have been sent to me. On the other hand, if he has come among us to make converts, we will try to turn the tables on him. If he has come to scoff, he may remain to pray."

The colonel walked the length of the room, his hands in his pockets, his head bowed on his breast.

"You haven't mentioned these papers to any one, have you?" he asked Hamilton, when he came back.

"Nobody but Nanny an' Davie."

"Then don't, James! Let Nanny and the boy return them without comment, and ask Nanny not to speak to Anno Domini about them. Every man is innocent before the law until proved guilty, James. Don't let us be harsher than the law, especially since the man is a stranger, without money or friends, come among us for the health of his wife and trying to make an honest living. Possessing such papers as these might injure him seriously. Such men as Louis Renier — you and I know why his servants are continually running away — would be only too glad to put it on a man in this position and hound him from the county."

The colonel shook his head. He made another tour

of the room and when he came back his brow had cleared.

"Wouldn't you like to go to school, my boy?" He placed his hand affectionately on the child's head.

David only blinked; his heart was too full for words.

"Then you shall! Believe every man honest until he proves a rascal, James. We will take Mr. Herrick at his word and give him a fair trial."

CHAPTER III

ON THE OLD CAMP GROUND

ON a Monday morning in August, when the earliest cotton was whitening the fields, James Hamilton put up his fishing tackle and shouldering his bag of tools set out to repair the gins of the neighboring plantations. The following Friday, early in the afternoon, Nancy looked up from her loom and found him standing in the door.

"Mrs. Greenwood sent me to bring you to camp meetin'," he explained, in answer to her exclamation of surprise. "The gineral has come an' she wants 'im to see Davie."

"The gineral! Why, when did he git here?" Nancy asked.

"He got in town las' night an' Dick went in this mornin' an' took 'im out to the Hall. I druv in with Dick, an' —" He hesitated, glanced smiling at the eager faces of his wife and son, then stepping back to the door brought in the large parcel he had left on the water-shelf. "As ye air goin' amongst sech fine folks, honey, I thought ye might want somethin' new." He removed the paper and handed Nancy a white straw bonnet, a wide poke trimmed with frills of lace, pink roses and apple-green ribbon strings. "I didn't forgit you, sonny; I fetched you a new pair of gallusses. Anner Dominy was in town an' helped me pick 'em both out."

David was speechless with delight. Never before had he owned a pair of store suspenders, and wonderful, indeed, was the pair his father had brought him, — wide bands of cotton, woven in the national colors with broad stripes of red, white and blue.

Nancy laid her hand on her husband's arm. Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes suffused with tears.

"What did ye git fer yo'self, Jamie? It wouldn't seem right fer me an' Davie t' go t' meetin' with new things an' you a-wearin' yo' ole clothes."

"Now, don' ye fret, honey! I've got somethin', an' I never had to buy it neither." He winked slyly at David, as he drew a small parcel from his trousers' pocket. "Dick brought 'em all the way from Paris. He said he brought me a knife from London, but John Henry begged so fer it an' I didn't come t' see 'im, so he guv it to John Henry. Dick wanted me t' take a neck ribbon, but he had mo' o' these, so I jes' tole him I didn't have no mortal use fer nothin' else."

First wiping his hands on the sides of his trousers to make sure they were clean, he spread out on the table a pair of dainty white kid gloves. Strangely out of place they looked in the rough loom-room, handled by the gaunt, bare-footed hunter and Nancy with her toil-roughened fingers. The sensitive soul of the child recognized the incongruity, and instantly his thought flew back to the picture of a dainty little girl, standing before the fire in the rough cabin and singing for her supper. For hours that night he thrashed his bed, and when at length he fell asleep he dreamed that he was wearing the wonderful kid gloves and that Annie Laurie was crying because they belonged to her.

The sun was just rising the next morning when, leaving the Greenwood plantation, they struck the public road and Hamilton turned the ox's head towards the Richmond Camp Ground.

Fancy if you can, with a period of sixty years between, travelling down that road at sunrise! Instead of a succession of small truck-farms, each with its group of thin, narrow buildings, which appear to be crowding each other into the road, every group surrounded by a pert-looking picket fence, David saw great sweeps of fields, broken now and then by tracks of heavy woodland. On the hills, a half mile and more from the road, approached by broad avenues, were the homes of the

planters, spacious wooden houses with tall pillars and wide piazzas, placed in the midst of groves and flower-gardens.

Cotton picking had begun in earnest. Many of the fields were alive with nimble-fingered slaves, now laughing and talking as they gathered the fleecy staple, now shouting back and forth across the fences to the slaves of the neighboring plantations, now bursting into song. In the one of the largest fields a high-bodied wagon was being driven around, collecting huge baskets on the verge of overflowing with the snowy cotton, while the pickers could be seen marching in single file towards the house, singing.

In the next field there was neither singing nor laughter. The wide sweep of cotton field, the busy slaves, and over it all dead silence! David felt as though the sun had suddenly gone under a cloud.

"Howdy, Tom," Hamilton said to a young negro, picking cotton near the fence. He was a tall, strongly built young man of a light ginger-cake color.

"Mornin', Mahse Jeems," the negro replied, glancing up; and David saw that his face looked sullen and swollen, and his eyes were bloodshot.

"Comin' t' camp meetin', Tom?"

The negro shook his head, his broad lips stretched into a sort of mirthless smile. Never once did his fingers slacken their busy picking nor did he straighten up.

"No, sir, I reckon not. Mahster don't b'lieve in camp meetin'."

Hamilton broke a twig from an overhanging sassafras bush and stripping off the leaves began to chew the stick. At the end of the field, he glanced back at the stooping figures of the cotton pickers.

"Folks say Louis Renier is the meanest man in Richmond county. Durn my skin, Nannie, ef I don't b'lieve he's the meanest man in the State o' Georgy. Now, I'd jes' like t' know what he's been a-beatin' Tom about — put 'im t' work in the field, too, an' him the best jockey an' the handiest man about the house in the county."

"Do you think he's been a-beatin' him, Jamie?"

Hamilton glanced over his shoulder at her.

"Didn't ye see the fresh stains across his back? They had made 'im put on a clean shirt but the blood had come through. I most wish he'd killed the po' devil."

"Killed the nigger, Jamie?"

Hamilton nodded his head.

"Then the law would take holt of Louis Renier. With the feelin' that's agin 'im in the county, I reckon he'd be put an' kept whar he couldn't mistreat no mo' niggers. Why, he has mo' runaways than all the rest o' the county put together! Yistiddy me an' Dick heard that he'd bought a pack o' blood-hounds from ole man Butler. They say he's a-goin' t' take 'em through his quarters night an' mornin'; he's tired travellin' around the country payin' runaway niggers out o' jail. Dick sent Renier word, that if ever he caught 'em on his grandmother's lan', he'd shoot 'em dead."

"An' I hope he'll do it, too," was Nancy's emphatic comment.

Hamilton smiled as he answered.

"Thar ain't no danger he won't, honey, the very fust chance he gits."

The sun had risen above the tree-tops and passing vehicles were more numerous. A little farther on, another public road cut into that on which the Hamilton ox-cart traveled. From it there was a crowd streaming in, wagons, buggies, a carriage, a negro driving a cow and a calf, more wagons and buggies. Then David saw something the like of which he had never seen or heard of, two horses, driven one in front of the other, hitched to a light four-wheeled vehicle in which sat a young man, with a negro perched on a seat behind him. The next moment David's heart was in his mouth, for the prancing horses drew up beside the ox-cart and Mr. Decatur Fulton was lifting his hat and greeting Nancy and Hamilton.

"How would you like to take a seat with me, little man?" he asked, smiling down at the boy.

"I'd like it mighty well, thank ye," David answered

promptly. He scrambled up from the straw in the bottom of the ox-cart and, resting one foot on the wheel, stepped over and took his seat beside Mr. Fulton.

The whole earth was a smile as he spun down the road, seated beside the young owner of the fastest pair of horses in the county.

Only once during the ride did the little boy open his lips. That was to ask a question as they drove along the road which skirted the camp ground at the back of the tents.

"Is the gineral here?" he asked.

"Not yet," Mr. Fulton answered. "He is going to drive over from Good Hope with Uncle George. Do you want to see the general?"

David nodded his head gravely.

"That's what I've come fer," he replied.

The first person he saw when he left the buggy was Mr. Beverly. After he had shaken hands with Mr. Fulton he looked down at David, smiling.

"I think I have met this little man before," said he. He placed his hand kindly on the boy's head and, turning, called just as he had done in the market: "Twiggs, my son, here is David Hamilton."

Twiggs came and, with him, a boy a shade taller and more sturdily built, whom he introduced as his cousin, Jack Clinton. When Mr. Beverly and Decatur walked on towards the tent the three boys followed abreast, David in the middle. Twiggs had asked about the fishing at the lower ford and David was telling them about that first fishing-party, — the little man with the white umbrella, the rifled lunch basket and the hounds. Before he finished the story he saw that Mr. Fulton had entered the tent and was leaning down to kiss a stately old lady, who wore a high white cap on her snowy head. David knew at once that it was Mrs. Greenwood, the old general's daughter, and the general's and the colonel's sister. Because his mother had told him he must speak to ladies, he left the two boys, and, taking his hat in his hand, went forward. When Mr. Fulton turned, he found him standing at his side.

"Grandmother, here is David," he said. "I overtook Jim and Miss Nancy on the road, so I brought David with me."

Mrs. Greenwood put her arm around the little boy and smoothing back his hair kissed him on his forehead. Then she told him that she had known his father and his grandfather when they were babies and that his great-grandfather had carried her in his arms when she was a little girl.

There was a ripple of gay laughter and, turning, David saw three young girls, their arms entwined about each other, just entering the tent. It was not necessary for Mr. Fulton to introduce the girl in the middle as his sister Ruth. The little boy had heard his father say that Miss Ruth was the prettiest girl in the county, and he knew her at once. It was hard for him to take his eyes from her face. When Twiggs and Jack called him to come and finish telling them about the hounds and the fishing-party, he said to her:

"I aint a-goin' fer good. I'm comin' back as soon as I kin."

He was telling about the kick into the river, and how Mr. Fulton had jumped in and struck out. Suddenly he broke off, exclaiming:

"Why, thar he is, now!"

"Who?" Twiggs and Jack spoke in the same breath.

"Why, the little feller with the white umbrill, Telly Tutwyler."

"So it is," said Twiggs, "with his wife, and his daughter, and his niece, and his son. Hello, Eusebius," speaking to young Mr. Tutwyler, who left his parents and came forward to join them. "This is my friend, David Hamilton, and my cousin, Jack Clinton of New York."

David half extended his hand and was about to say: "I am glad to meet you," as Twiggs had done, when they met in the market, and Jack, when he was introduced. Young Tutwyler didn't give him time. After the coldest of cold glances he turned quickly to Jack.

"I've been to New York myself," he said, bowing and

scraping one foot in the way then taught in dancing school. "It's such a deucedly entertaining city. My gad, you must be dying to get back there."

The northern boy laughed.

"No, I want to stay here all winter. Uncle Beverly and Colonel Twiggs have engaged a teacher for Tupelo Academy and I want to stay here and go to school with Twiggs and David."

"Brother Twiggs," a soft voice interrupted, and David, turning, for the second time in his life saw a vision. At first he was sure the little girl was more beautiful than Annie Laurie.

When Twiggs introduced her as his sister Margaret, the little boy was further surprised. She did not draw back, nor run away and hide, as the other little girl had done. Instead, she greeted him with all the sweet graciousness of a young queen, taking it as her right that the four boys should stand uncovered in her presence.

It was not until Margaret had gone back to her old nurse that the boys caught sight of two gentlemen approaching the Greenwood tent. David knew at once that they were the colonel and the general. At first he felt a shock of disappointment. He had expected the general to wear a bright uniform, knee breeches and cocked hat, such as, by his father's description, the old general had worn; but, when he saw how grandly he walked and noticed his fierce gray mustache, he felt he was every inch a great soldier, and his little heart throbbed with pride. Unconsciously his own back grew more erect and his short legs stretched out into longer strides when they joined Mr. Fulton and went forward to meet the two gentlemen.

"Uncle David, here is a little man who came to camp meeting expressly to see you," Decatur said, drawing David forward after General Twiggs had shaken hands with the other three boys.

"Ah," said the general. He extended his hand and smiled, and David saw that the eyes under his shaggy brows were as blue and as kindly as his sister's. "What is your name, my son?"

"David Twiggs Hamilton, sir." There was a glint of mischief in the little boy's eyes.

"Why, bless my soul!" the general exclaimed, laughing. Then he patted David on the head and asked about his father and his mother.

As they moved on to the tent he kept David and Twiggs at his side, walking between them with his hands resting on their shoulders.

It seemed scarcely a minute to the little boy before the great tent was crowded with people, all come to shake hands with the old soldier. Through it all he kept the two boys at his side, introducing them as his namesakes. Everybody was kind to David and greeted him so cordially that his little heart was near bursting from gratitude and happiness. It was just then, when the crowd was at its greatest, that a girl's penetrating voice exclaimed:

"Oh, do look! Now, isn't that a picture of country come to town, for you?" The speaker was Miss Tutwyler, and she pointed to a couple, a tall man and a little woman, who, having left their ox-cart with Mr. Decatur Fulton's servant, were walking towards the Greenwood tent.

"The beggars have come to town! Some in rags, and some in tags, and some in velvet gowns," her cousin sang. Then she added, giggling: "Did you ever see anything as hideously common as those roses in that bonnet, and that lace?"

"The man is worse, — white kid gloves and barefooted!" Eusebius Tutwyler glanced around for approbation from the people about him.

General Twiggs felt a tremor pass through the little body under his right hand. He didn't in the least understand, but his pressure on the boy's shoulder increased and for an instant steadied him. The next moment David was looking up at him, his face flushed, his eyes flashing.

"It's my daddy, an' my mammy. Lemme go!" he panted, and he tried to twist himself free, but the old soldier's grip was like steel.

Then the general felt another tremor pass through the little body, like the heaving of a great sigh of relief, and David was still. Miss Ruth with her filmy muslin skirts floating around her, as only Miss Ruth's skirts could float, left the tent and went forward to meet James Hamilton and Nancy. She greeted them cordially, kissing Nancy. Decatur joined them, and Mrs. Greenwood and the colonel met them at the edge of the shed. Then a marvellous thing happened. The general, instead of greeting Nancy as he had the ladies who called to see him, stooped down and kissed her as he had Miss Ruth and the other ladies of his blood.

Those were wonderful days for David. Whenever the horn blew he went to the stand, and, sitting between Jack and Twiggs, listened attentively to the long sermons, firmly convinced that he was hearing the most famous preachers in the world. Between these services there were the strolls about the grounds, and he learned to take off his hat to the ladies and the old gentlemen, just as he saw his two young friends do. On Sunday morning Margaret joined them, and under the care of Mammy they all went for a walk to the spring under the hill.

On their return they found Mattie Marschalk in the Greenwood tent. The sight of her reminded David of the other little girl who had visited the cabin on the bluff, and when he caught a glimpse of Mr. Herrick during the eleven o'clock sermon, he forgot to listen to the preacher, so busy was he wondering if Annie Laurie had come. When they got back to the tent, there she was, sitting in Mammy's lap, laughing and talking to Margaret as though they had known each other forever.

After dinner, when they went for their stroll, the two little girls went with them. Margaret and Jack walked ahead, for even then Margaret and Jack were sweethearts, and Twiggs and David followed, with Annie Laurie between them.

That evening they had their supper out under the

trees behind the Greenwood tent, for a great crowd had come out from Augusta to attend the evening service.

"George Pierce is going to preach," Twiggs explained to his cousin. "He's the Methodist bishop, and they say he's the best speaker in Georgia, next to Alec Stephens."

Soon after they took their seats at supper David saw a familiar face.

"Ain't that Tom — Tom Renier?" he asked.

"Yes, he's Susan's husband and she makes him help her," Margaret replied.

"You know Susan is Cousin Ruth's maid," Twiggs explained. "When Mr. Renier wouldn't give his consent for them to get married and refused to sell Tom to Cousin Decatur, they ran away and married themselves. You know how they do? Invite all their friends, build a big fire in front of the quarter, jump over a broomstick, then have a big supper! When Aunt Greenwood heard of it, she said it would never do. The bishop was staying at Greenwood Hall, so Aunt Greenwood sent for Tom and had the bishop marry him and Susan, there in the parlor. It was a fine wedding, I can tell you. They had tables all set out on the grass in the back yard and about the best supper I ever did eat."

"Did you go?" asked Eusebius Tutwyler, amazed.

"Why, of course! Everybody went, Uncle George and Aunt Sally, and Uncle Clinton, and everybody but the Reniers. Aunt Greenwood sent them invitations but they didn't come."

"Susan had a lovely white dress," Margaret told Annie Laurie. "Cousin Ruth gave it to her; it was bran' new."

"Yes, and Decatur gave Tom a new suit of clothes, and they had a big dance in the barn that Aunt Greenwood had had cleared out for them. We didn't go to that," he said, speaking to young Tutwyler. "Uncle George said there wasn't room, and because the servants had manners enough to invite us was all the more

"It must come, sister! Washington saw it, Jefferson foretold it. If not now, later! Sometimes I think it will be in a whirlwind of blood and disaster for both the North and the South; it may even destroy the country our father worked so hard to help establish."

"And you, brother," Mrs. Greenwood placed her hand on the general's knee, "what will you do? Which side will you take?"

There was a short silence; then General Twiggs spoke.

"It will be hard to fight against the old flag," he said, and to the boy listening it seemed that his voice shook. "But my State is my mother; I will stand by Georgia."

Out under the stand David heard Bishop Pierce reading a hymn, line by line, and the negroes singing.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH DAVID MAKES A PROMISE

ON the first of October Tupelo Academy opened its doors with Nathaniel Herrick behind the teacher's desk. At sunrise that day, and every school day thereafter, David set out from the cabin on the bluff, cut across the fields of the Greenwood plantation, picked up Mattie Marschalk, and walking a mile further down the public road waited at the gate of the Baldee lane for the teacher and his little daughter. It was a long walk for a child to take twice a day, and at first every bone in his little body ached. He was glad enough when night came and he could tumble into bed, falling asleep almost before his head touched the pillow. As time passed, however, the regular exercise lengthened his sturdy little legs and he grew more vigorous both in body and mind.

Before Christmas he had learned enough in his blueback speller to be put in the class with Annie Laurie and Margaret. It was soon after his promotion that Colonel Twiggs met Mr. Herrick and asked about the progress of his various scholars.

"David Hamilton, sir," said the teacher, "is one of the brightest boys I have ever taught. When he entered school he didn't know one letter from another. Now he not only reads surprisingly well but he figures; why, Colonel Twiggs, that boy has a perfect genius for figures. Even John Clinton, with his superior educational advantages, is no match for him."

The next day Colonel Twiggs met James Hamilton in Augusta and took him into Richards' bookstore. As they came out, he handed Hamilton a small package.

"Take this to David," he said. "Tell him when he

finishes reading them he must come over and tell me which book he likes the better."

To the three inmates of the cabin on the bluff, that was a memorable evening, the beginning of a series of memorable evenings. David opened the colonel's parcel and found two books, "Guy Mannering" and "The Scottish Chiefs." First the little boy began to read to himself, but when his mother, noticing his interest, asked what the book was about, he offered to read aloud. It was "The Scottish Chiefs." Hamilton soon left off cobbling Nancy's shoes and stopped to listen.

"God bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "If those ain't the same folks my gran'daddy use to tell me about, afore I wus knee high to a duck. Stop, sonny, that ain't the way yo' great-gran'daddy called that name." From that on, he was careful to have David call the name as the old Scotchman had pronounced it.

Every afternoon during that winter David hurried home from school to get in wood and water and do other little errands for his mother before supper. Hamilton was careful to cut an abundant supply of extra fat lightwood, and Nancy, who was noted throughout the neighborhood for her quickness, cleared the supper table and washed the dishes in a surprisingly short time, even for her. When all was finished, a bright fire roaring in the chimney, Nancy seated with her sewing and Hamilton working over his fishing tackle or smoking his pipe, the boy took his book down from the shelf, drew his little bench to the edge of the hearth and read aloud, picking up the story where he left off the night before.

That spring the bickering which had been going on among the politicians since the admission of Texas into the Union, and even before, culminated. The United States declared war against Mexico. Although the older men of Richmond County had at first asserted that there was no reason for war, when hostilities really began and the news of the first battle came, they were as eager to volunteer as the youngsters. Augusta was brilliant with the freshness of spring the day that the

Richmond Blues marched gaily through her streets, and, amid the cheers of the crowd, set out for the war. Margaret and Twiggs and Jack were there in the carriage with Mrs. Beverly, and David rode with them. They had come to bid good by to Mr. Beverly. As he marched by in the ranks of the Blues, though his wife cried as if her heart would break and Margaret shed tears in sympathy, the three boys shouted until their throats were almost split.

"I hope there'll be a war when I grow up," Twiggs said.

"Shake!" answered David.

The two gripped each other's hands, while Jack, to have his share in the wish, took their clasped hands between both his own.

Soon after the departure of the volunteers for Mexico, James Hamilton began to bring a copy of the daily *Chronicle and Sentinel* home every evening. Besides following the movements of their own friends, David read accounts of the battles of Palo Alto and of Resaca de la Palma. How the boy's heart glowed with pride! Didn't the "Old War Horse" — so they called him in the papers — for whom he was named, play his part in both of the great battles, and a brave part it was too!

After the second of these battles, Twiggs declared they should form a company and learn how to drill against the time their turn came. Miss Ruth made them a flag with her own fingers and every day at recess Captain Twiggs Beverly drilled his company, with Jack Clinton and David Hamilton as his first and second lieutenants.

It was David's reading the newspapers more than anything else that aroused Nancy and made her determine that he should have the education that he craved. She became more sparing of her milk and took greater pains with her chickens. By and by she began to make regular trips to Hans King's little store with a bucket of neatly moulded butter on her arm or a basket from which protruded the inquisitive heads of fat young broilers. By these means she added other books to David's shelf and a number of small coins to the little

hoard in the clean yarn sock, hid in the bottom of her meal barrel.

When the hot weather came, school broke. Jack Clinton returned to his home in the North but Twiggs and Margaret did not go with him. Mrs. Beverly said she did not care to go farther away from her husband, so, instead, they went to the Springs in the upper part of the State. The colonel took his family to the Falls and Miss Ruth went with them. Mrs. Greenwood shook her head. She had two brothers in Mexico now, the general and the major, and thought she would be happier at home.

About this time Mr. Herrick announced his summer plans. Mrs. Herrick and Annie Laurie were to go to relatives in North Carolina while he would make a business trip through the South.

"Lan' o' Goshen!" Mrs. Peter Marschalk exclaimed, when the movements of the teacher's family reached her ears. "I'd jest like to know what sort o' business that male critter is fitten t' tend to besides teachin' children to read an' cipher. He planted them gyarden seed I give his wife so deep that the last one of 'em rotted in the ground;" and she emptied, from her apron into the tin pan at her side, the green peas which she had been shelling. The little Dutchman said nothing, but he nodded his approval while he continued to smoke his long-stemmed pipe.

That summer David had plenty of time for reading. When the days grew long and it was too hot to remain indoors, every evening he sat out under the trees reading to his father and mother until the sun went down and there was not light enough left to see the letters. Often of a Sunday Anno Domini and Mattie sat with them, and sometimes even Peter and Bubber — so his friends called Peter Marschalk junior — would come over. It was on one of these occasions that Bubber interrupted David.

"I seen Nat Herrick as I wus comin' over," said he.

"Ye don't tell!" exclaimed his mother. "Has he got back a-ready? Did he say his wife had come?"

"Oh, he didn't have time t' speak. He jes' dodged back in the swamp where he come from. He wus on a line with Yaller Ned's cave. I seen the old dead pine, with the shumake bush a-growin' in the top, right over his head."

"Yaller Ned's cave!" David had never heard the name before.

"Lor, sonny, it happened befo' you wus born. When I wus a boy, an ole runaway nigger use t' live in that cave, an' the smoke from his fire use t' come up through the holler o' the dead pine. He wus yaller an' somehow folks found out his name wus Ned. He never stole nothin'; he jes' stayed in that cave livin' on fish an' berries. In the winter" — Hamilton glanced at Mrs. Marschalk and smiled — "Anner's mother use to take victuals an' put it on a stump in the woods. One time they said she put a whole side o' bacon an' a peck o' meal."

"An' she never wus sorry for it neither," said the woman, holding up her head defiantly. "The very last week o' her life I heard her grievin' because she never done it again, fer the next winter they found ole Ned dead, settin' up by the side o' that stump. He'd starved to death."

"Yaller Ned wus the only runaway nigger I ever heard of when I wus a boy, but now —" Hamilton shook his head.

"They say its worse'n chills an' fevers," Peter Marschalk remarked, taking the pipe from his mouth for the first time since his arrival. "'Round Beach Island they're goin' in droves, worse even than 'round here."

"The way Mrs. Greenwood treated Charles is the best cure I've heard of," Hamilton smiled.

"Charles, her butler? Lan' sakes, he hain't run away, has he?" Anno's surprise was genuine.

"Gone all last month," Hamilton replied. "He said he wus over-persuaded. After he had tramped as fer as Elberton, he went into town an' give himself up to the sheriff an' axed t' be sent home. They notified Mrs. Greenwood an' she sent Billy fer him;

don't you remember the week that Israel drove her carriage?"

Peter Marschalk nodded his head.

"When Billy returned she had all the servants come up t' the back yard. She wus settin' on the piazzy. — 'Charles,' she said, 'have I ever had you whipped?' 'No, miss,' Charlie answered. 'Haven't you had the same food that I have had on my table and as much as you wanted to eat?' 'Yes, miss.' 'Isn't your house comfortable?' 'Oh, yes, miss.' 'Have I ever overworked you, or in any way been harsh to you?' 'No, miss, Gawd knows you hain't never been ha'sh t' nobody.' Then Mrs. Greenwood told Billy to take him t' the smoke-'ouse an' give 'im two weeks rations —" Here Hamilton stopped to laugh and David asked eagerly:

"What did Charles say then, daddy?"

"Charles said," Hamilton went on, "'Hi, miss.' — Ye know how he's al'ays a-sayin' hi? — 'Hi, miss, ain't you gwine t' let me eat frum de kitchen no mo'? I swear 'fore Gawd I ain't never gwine t' run away again.' Mrs. Greenwood wouldn't listen to 'im. She said she didn't want no runaway niggers workin' for her, she couldn't trust 'em; Charles could live in his cabin or go where he pleased. He could hire himself out or not, just as he pleased, but as she didn't want 'im depredatin' on her neighbors, Billy was t' give 'im his allowance every two weeks. She didn't want 'im t' come to the yard any oftener; she would give 'im his freedom if she could, but Colonel Greenwood had left her the servants only durin' her lifetime. At her death they go to his children and grandchildren. If any of the other servants wanted t' go away, they had her permission. She would give them the same privilege she had given Charles; she didn't want anybody t' work for her who didn't wish to."

"Lan' o' Goshen!" Anno Domini threw up her hands. "Have her niggers all gone off?"

James Hamilton chuckled.

"Why, bless yo' soul, gal, thar ain't a rope made strong

enough to drag them niggers away. Charles! Why, everybody who goes up that avenue Charles stops an' begs t' ax his Miss t' let 'im come back an' go t' work. It don't matter how bad other people's niggers have the runnin' fever, thar won't be no mo' runaways on the Greenwood plantation, I reckon."

When school opened in the fall Jack was not there, and on the second day David was put in the class with Twiggs. Henry Robinson and a few other big boys, who had been working long division when David began to learn his figures and were working long division still, said it was to keep Twiggs from feeling lonesome for his cousin. Young Beverly only smiled, but a few days later he confided to his new classmate a conversation he had overheard between his mother and the colonel.

" Mr. Herrick had been telling the colonel how much you had improved," explained Twiggs — " how you had studied all summer and worked through fractions all by yourself."

" Peter Marschalk helped me," David corrected.

" Well, you know how to do the examples now, and that's the thing that counts," Twiggs asserted. " The colonel told mother he had talked it over with Aunt Greenwood and they had decided that you should have a fair show. If you continue to study as you have done, and they both believe you will, they will send you to college with me and Jack, and pay your expenses."

" I'll work an' pay 'em back; that's the way Alec Stephens done," was the little boy's reply, and his eyes glistened with tears of gratitude.

For two days he walked on air, not daring to tell his mother of the good luck in store for him. It was on the third day that the shock came.

On leaving home the week before, James Hamilton had told his wife he would remain in Columbia County until the following Thursday. He would then walk to the Robinson plantation in the afternoon and be ready to repair that gin the next morning, finishing in time to get a lift on Peter Marschalk's wagon which was going

to start for Burke late Friday afternoon. Here Hamilton had looked towards David, as he moved briskly back and forth between the house and the well, bringing in the day's supply of water before he left for school, and added:

"It's a long ways an' I hate mightily to miss Sunday at home, honey, but when that boy gits ready fer better schoolin' we'll be a-wantin' all the money we kin save, I reckon."

So Friday morning, as David set out for school, Nancy put a small bundle of clean clothes in his hands.

"Take 'em over t' Mr. Robinson's gin-house after school, sonny. It ain't mo' than a mile; ye'll have plenty o' time." After he had started she called to him; "Don't fergit t' tell 'im Huldy's got a calf, sonny, and tell 'im I knew he'd have nice eatin' in Burke but I jest put a few fresh tea cakes in the bundle, thinkin' he might git hungry between whiles."

But David did not wait until after school. Mrs. Beverly was driving into town and stopped for Margaret and Twiggs. Twiggs, knowing David's plans, insisted that he should drive down the road with them.

David left the carriage at the plantation gate, and slinging the bundle over his shoulders went whistling along the wagon road towards the gin-house which stood just over the brow of the hill at the edge of the wood. He had covered about half the distance when he saw a man riding towards him; it was the overseer's son and he was riding a plow-mule at the top of its speed. When he caught sight of the boy, he drew the mule in.

"Yo' daddy ain't hurt much, Davie," he panted, and he wiped the perspiration from his dripping face with the back of one hand. "He ain't hurt much. I'm a-goin' fer the doctor; I'll have 'im thar in no time."

He cut the mule with the long rope lines and galloped towards the big gate, while David, his young face the color of dead ashes, sped off towards the gin-house, running as he never had run before.

In the public road, about a mile further on, the over-

seer's son met Anno Domini walking to Hans King's store and halted his mule.

" Jim Hamilton's been hurt in the gin," he told her. Now he took off his rough straw hat and fanned himself with it. " He wus — "

" Jamie Hamilton? " Anno cried.

" Yes. He wus fixin' the saws an' the gin started. Gosh, I never knowed a man had so much blood in 'im, most tore 'is arm off, I reckon. I'm a-goin' fer the doctor." Again he lashed the mule and galloped off down the road.

" Has anybody sent for Nanny, his wife? " shrieked Anno Domini.

The boy answered over his shoulder.

" No. His son's there, Davie. I'm a-goin' fer the doctor; I'll have 'im thar in no time."

Yes, David was there. They had moved Hamilton out on the platform in front of the gin-house door, where he lay stretched on a pile of loose bagging and crocus sacks. When the child's gray face appeared above the platform, as he mounted the ladder, Hamilton made a great effort and dragged up a sack, covering the mutilated arm.

" Is you hurt, daddy? " David panted, and his knees shook so that he could hardly stand.

" Yes, sonny, but you mustn't mind. Did yo' mammy sen' me the clean clothes? "

" Yes, sir, an' some fresh tea cakes fer you to eat between whiles."

A quiver passed over the man's face. He lifted his hand and for a moment covered his eyes.

" She's a good gal, always thoughtful — an' tender," he murmured. Then he reached up and taking the boy's hand drew him down beside him. " I'm a-goin' away from you, sonny," he said gently, and the boy thought he meant to Burke County. " Ye mustn't forgit that daddy wants you ter work hard an' do all that an honest boy kin t' git edecated. Ye won't fergit, sonny? "

" No, sir, daddy," the child faltered.

"Ye'll stand by yo' mammy, sonny —" his voice had grown very weak and he paused for breath. "She's the best frien' ye'll ever have. Ye must stand by her through thick an' thin." Then his voice strengthened and he grasped the boy's hand firmly. "Ye'll promise me that, Davie; promise t' stan' by yo' mammy through thick an' thin?"

"Yes, sir, I promise," David answered, and his voice choked and his face was wet with tears.

A peaceful smile crept over the man's face and his tired lids fluttered down. James Hamilton's eyes had closed on this world forever.

The child couldn't know; he didn't understand. He still knelt there, clasping his father's hand and staring down at his smiling face.

When Anno Domini mounted the ladder to the platform, she was hot and dusty from running across the fields. She said nothing but she shook her fist at the frightened overseer. Then she dropped on her knees beside the prostrate figure and drew David tenderly within her arms.

CHAPTER V

NANCY FOLLOWS HER HEAD INSTEAD OF HER HEART

BEFORE the next spring Nancy had to find another hiding place for the yarn sock in which she kept her savings. More than once the bottom of her meal barrel became the top, she had to scrape it so clean. Now, instead of slipping the shining coins into the homespun bank, she drew them out from day to day with a regularity that made her sigh and sometimes shed bitter tears. The hens, missing their usual supply of parched corn, refused to lay eggs in mid-winter, and the milk of her one cow was too scanty and thin to think of making butter; besides, what was the boy to drink? She could do without coffee, drinking sassafras tea without sugar that he might not suspect her ruse, but he must have his milk night and morning, with a generous bottleful to carry to school for his lunch. So, before the warm weather really came, Nancy had grown thin and pale, with scarcely enough strength to drag herself about.

In February, Anno Domini, walking over one morning, found her on the slope of the hill, grubbing at a sassafras bush. Taking the hoe from her hands, with one quick vigorous jerk the tall woman pulled up the bush with its long trail of pink tap-root.

"What's the matter, Nannie, is Davie havin' biles?" she asked.

"No, it aint Davie, it's me —"

"You!" Anno Domini stared at her. "Why, yo' face is as white as a ghost; yo' blood can't need no thinnin'."

"Oh, it aint that my blood's too thick," Nancy hastened to say. "I like sassafras tea. I always did like it."

Anno opened her lips to speak; then shut them with a snap. They had halted to open the front gate. The sight of the bare garden, the scanty wood-pile, the few draggled chickens pecking about the door, the old setter dog, thin and gaunt! Having a husband and children of her own, Anno Domini didn't need to ask questions. Instead, she exclaimed:

" Lan' sakes! Ef I don't believe I'm losin' my mind. I clean forgot t' say what I come fer. — " She had left home with the avowed intention o' spendin' the day, but she did not hesitate. " I'm that tired hearin' him—" it was a peculiarity of Mrs. Peter Marschalk never to mention her husband's name — " I'm that tired hearin' him complain about my tryin' o' lard, that I jest up an' said this mornin' I wus a-comin' over t' git ye t' spen' the night with me so as t' be ready t' help in the mornin'. Ye know t'-morrer is our last hog-killin'. Yes, we've had three, an' I most feel's if I never wanted t' see a piece o' hog meat 's 'long as I live. Every time he'd go t' Burke fer cattle, he'd stop by the house on the way back an' leave a whole passle o' hogs he'd picked up cheap down the country. Lan' o' Goshen! One time I thought that place would be clean overrun by the critters."

Nancy made a faint protest against leaving home for so long, offering to come later in the day, but Anno was not to be put off.

" I wouldn't have the face t' go back without ye, honey, after tellin' him I wus a-goin' t' git ye t' show me how t' try out that lard. Ye hain't no notion how stubborn a Dutchman is. Git yo' sewin', — an' ye better fetch a book so Davie kin read t' us t'night. Twiggs Beverly says he's the best reader in Tupelo 'cademy, an' Mattie is always a-braggin' about 'im."

After the chickens were fed and the bleating calf turned out of the pen to join its mother and the old ox in the swamps, Anno pulled to the cabin door and looped the rawhide latch on the wooden pin outside. Then she whistled to the old setter and, tucking Nancy's bundle

under her arm, led the way down the hill, the widow walking meekly behind her.

It was not until three days later that they returned. Then they sat together on the high front seat of a wagon drawn by the old gray mare, while on the back, perched equally as near heaven, were David and Mattie. There were numerous parcels, buckets, bottles and jugs in the bottom of the wagon, and Mrs. Marschalk, though she said she was in a great hurry, saw them all safely deposited in the cabin before taking her departure. She talked so fast and so continuously, while making the transfer, that Nancy failed to get in a word of thanks. As she drove down the hill, the little woman stood in the gate looking after her, her bosom heaving and her cheeks wet with tears. That night Anno stopped the whir of her spinning wheel and called to her daughter.

"Mattie, ye hain't heard Twiggs say when the colonel was expected back, is ye?"

"No'm, I hain't heard nothin'," the little girl answered.

"I mought've knowed ye hadn't. That's Dutch all over; ye might as well be born stone blind an' deaf in both years."

Again the whir of the wheel and for half an hour Peter and Bubber smoked their pipes undisturbed. Anno Domini's foot came down with a thud and her thread snapped off short.

"I declare t' goodness if it ain't jest the world's way! Folks never is whar ye want 'em t' be. Ef Miss Ruth wus here, I wouldn't worry another minute about Nancy and Davie."

"Where's Miss Ruth?" Peter asked, removing his pipe for an instant from between his lips.

"Lan' o' Goshen, man, ye don't tell me that ye hain't heard that Miss Ruth's in Paris, bein' finished? Well, she is an' she's been thar ever since the middle o' last summer — an' Decatur's in some gran' college in Englan' — an' the colonel —" Anno had tied her thread and the spinning wheel was beginning to revolve again, slowly. "Well, it do seem like the colonel is so worried about the general leadin' that thar war in Mexico, that

he can't stay still. I'd speak to Mrs. Greenwood if I wasn't afraid."

"Afraid!" Peter thought his ears had deceived him. He turned his freshly filled pipe upside down and all the tobacco fell out on the floor.

"Yes, an' if you knew her 's well as I do, ye'd be afraid too —"

Peter shook his head and began carefully to refill his pipe. He didn't think the two cases quite parallel. His wife was still talking.

"I ain't a-sayin' she'd be ugly about it or say anything sharp, fer she's a lady born an' raised — I hain't never heard of a better in the state. She took after her father, an' I never did hear of nobody, man, woman, nor child, that wus brave enough to pint out t' the old gineral his duty. They say Gineral Washington called 'im the savior of Georgy; but I never heard tell that he told 'im how t' save Georgy. Gineral Washington didn't dare! He had too much sense. That's the way with me. I know Mrs. Greenwood wants t' do her duty by Nancy, but I can't screw myself up to the pint of tellin' her."

In less than a month she did screw her courage up, however. Early in March, as she was walking down the road to King's store, the Greenwood carriage overtook her. The old lady, chancing to look out just then, saw Mrs. Marschalk, and the heavy green silk tassel, that hung at her right hand, was straightway pulled. Billy, the old coachman, stopped the horses.

"Good mornin', Anno Domini," said Mrs. Greenwood, bowing through the open window. "Wont you take a seat with me?"

Like a flash the negro boy was down from the dickey-seat, opening the carriage door and letting down the little steps. As they rolled off down the road the old lady inquired about Peter and the rest of her family.

"Oh, they're all well, thank you, ma'am. That's one good thing about the Dutch; ye have to maul 'em over the head with a lightwood knot to kill 'em. But Nanny ain't right well." She told her husband that

night that this piece of information just slipped out unbeknownst and almost scared her stiff.

"Why, I hadn't heard of that." Mrs. Greenwood was interested. "What seems to be the matter?"

"She says she's got a little touch o' the rheumatiz; but I believe it's tryin' t' live on sto' meal." Here Anno's tongue slipped its leash again. "The colonel use' to pay Jamie in corn; it wus enough to last 'em all the year. This year they didn't git none."

"Didn't get any?" the old lady repeated. "Brother George didn't give James corn?"

"Jamie didn't fix his gin. He — he hadn't got t' the colonel's."

"That should have made no difference. Why didn't Nancy tell brother George? She should have let me know. Is there anything else she needs?"

Here Anno's awe was swept away by a mighty wave of courage. She turned and faced Mrs. Greenwood.

"Tother day I caught 'er grubbin' up sassafras root. She said she jes' loved the tea. She's been drinkin' it all winter without sugar."

"My, my!" the old lady exclaimed, and she clasped her slender hands in her lap. "That will never do, will never do. Why didn't I know?"

When the carriage drew up before King's store, the little storekeeper came running out.

"Hansford," said Mrs. Greenwood, after Anno Domini had stepped out, "have you a pound of good Java and Mocha this morning? I would also like ten pounds of sugar, number C." She glanced around, puzzled.

"I'll see that she gits 'em," Anno told her.

Mrs. Greenwood nodded assent.

"Yes, give them to Mrs. Marschalk," she instructed the storekeeper. Then she put out her hand. "Thank you for telling me, my dear. I will send Billy over tomorrow. I'm an old woman, you know. I have to depend on you young people more and more as time goes on. Until Ruth returns you must keep me posted, Anno; help me to do my duty."

Before leaving Augusta that day, Mrs. Greenwood

visited the store of Ben. Warren & Co., on Yazoo Corner. There she selected two patterns of black and white calico and had the salesman, James Miller, cut off enough for a bonnet and dress of each. Then Mr. Miller threw down a bolt of muslin.

"Genuine English goods, a yard wide and warranted not t' fade — white ground sprinkled over with purple blue-bells, the very thing for a young widow t' wear t' church or camp-meeting."

Mrs. Greenwood, recalling Nancy's last appearance at camp-meeting, at once ordered a bonnet and dress cut off. That is how it happened that Mr. Jim Miller selected Nancy's second wedding dress and Mrs. Greenwood paid for it.

In April, when the news of the battle of Cerro Gordo came, the pupils of Tupelo Academy had a holiday. The people of Richmond County, of the entire State of Georgia, threw up their hats, for hadn't their general won a great victory! It was after this battle that David, and many others throughout the country, heard for the first time the name of Robert E. Lee. His name was mentioned more than once by General Twiggs in his report of that battle.

At Tupelo the children had a holiday! The boys drilled while the girls spread the table cloth under the arching branches of the huge tree from which the school took its name, and set out their lunch. It was after the feast that the great event of the day took place. The Beverly Home Guards were presented with a new flag. Every star was in its place and the stripes as perfectly proportioned as though the chief flag-maker of the Union, if there be such an official, had made it. Although Mrs. Beverly and Mammy had done the cutting and basting, every stitch had been made by Margaret and Annie Laurie.

How the boys cheered when they came forward holding the flag between them! Then they made their little speeches, and Captain Twiggs Beverly his reply of acceptance. Mrs. Beverly took her seat at the piano — it had been brought over from the Hall and set up under

the tree — and all, Mrs. Beverly, Mr. Herrick, Anno Domini, Mammy, and the children, sang:

"'The star-spangled banner, O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!'"

It was a happy day for David. That afternoon, as he walked home through the cotton fields, whistling, his thoughts were busy with the picture of Annie Laurie as she had stood under the shadow of the bright colored flag at Mrs. Beverly's elbow, leading the singing.

When he reached the cabin on the bluff Hansford King was seated in his wagon before the gate.

"Howdy," said the boy. Then, remembering that the store-keeper had spoken to him the week before about buying their calf, he asked, "Have you come for the calf?"

The man grinned, then snickered.

"I've come for the cow an' the calf both, I reckon," he answered.

"Why, has mammy sold the cow?" David showed his surprise.

"Not sold it, jest give hit t' me; goin' to set it right here on the seat aside me."

David had never disliked the storekeeper as much. Now his stupid attempt at making a joke disgusted him. He didn't even try to think what he meant. As he stepped up on the porch of the cabin, his mother appeared in the door.

"You've got back early, honey," she said, smiling nervously. She put one hand on his shoulder and turned him around until he faced Hansford King. "That's yo' new paw, Davie."

"New what?" The boy did not in the least understand.

"Yo' new daddy, honey. Me an' Hans have jes' got back. We drove t' town this mornin' an' the preacher married us."

David's face was as white as a sheet, but he did not open his lips nor move a muscle.

"Ain't ye a-goin' t' shake han's?" the man asked. He had left the wagon and was standing on the narrow brick walk by the edge of the porch.

"I s'pose so," the boy answered, and he allowed King to grasp his trembling hand.

Stumbling into the cabin, he dropped down in a chair at the foot of the bed in which his father used to sleep. His book-sack was slung over his shoulder and his lunch-bucket was in his hand. A few minutes later Nancy called to him.

"Come, Davie, we are ready to start."

"Where do you want me to go?" he asked. His voice sounded husky, but when he appeared in the door there was no sign of tears in his eyes.

"Why, t' Hans' sto', our new home. It'll be a sight nearer school fer ye, Davie."

That night, when Nancy called King to supper in the room back of the store, he told her it was cleaner and brighter than it had ever looked before, and for once, at least, he spoke the truth. The supper, he said, was the best he had ever eaten at his own table. There also, he said only that which was true. Nancy was a famous cook and having once more an abundant supply of materials she would willingly have cooked and scrubbed all night. At the table she laughed and talked more than David had seen her do since his father's death, but the boy little knew that his evident relish of the food set before him was the direct cause of her gayety. When she helped him the second time to honey, Hans said:

"That's right, Nannie, make him eat a-plenty. Plenty o' grub an' plenty o' work, that's my doctrine. We'll have t' be hustlin' early in the mornin', Davie, t' load them chickens on the wagon an' git t' town by sun-up. I'm glad ye've been t' the lower market. It'll save me sendin' Gabe t' show ye the way."

The boy looked up startled.

"To-morrow ain't Saturday. To-morrow's a school day."

Hans smiled, and ran his fingers through his moth-eaten beard.

" Well, a smart boy like you oughten t' mind missin' a few days from school. Ef what folks say is true, — an' I hain't never seen nothin' t' make me think different — I'm a-thinkin' ye might stay away from that school half the time an' then keep up with them other boys."

" Ye promised to keep 'im at school, Hans," Nancy ventured timidly. " Ye know ye did."

" So I will, Nannie, jest as soon as I git over this press o' work. I've put in a right sharp lot o' cotton an' corn myself, an' look at all them melons an' taters, an' that big gyarden o' stuff Colonel Twiggs an' Miss Greenwood put in fer you! You needn't think they's a-goin' to work 'em now; they hates me like pison. No, me an' Gabe 'll look out fer the crap, you'll make a mighty fine han' in the sto', an' Davie'll do the haulin'. Come another year I'll have money t' git a nigger. I al'as has hankered arter ownin' niggers."

The honey was like gall on the boy's tongue. Without a word he left the table and climbing the ladder to the loft went over to the corner where his pallet was stretched.

Nancy put the corner of her apron to her eyes, and King, leaving his seat, went round and patted her on the shoulder.

" Now, don't ye worry, honey. Jes' you let me git a good start an' I'll sholy keep my promise. That boy shall have 's good an edecation as ary gentlemen's son in this county. I'll make 'im glad his mammy married Hans King."

Nancy, because she had had one good man for a husband, judged all others by him.

CHAPTER VI

HUMAN CHATTELS

"YE kin stick a few clothes in my carpet-bag, Nannie, I reckon," Hansford King said, as he took his seat opposite his wife at their little supper table.

"Have ye made up yo' mind to go to Savanny, Hans?" Nancy asked, glancing up from the cup she was filling with coffee.

"Yes, I reckon I has. Trowbridge says niggers'll be cheaper'n dirt at that sale. Louis Renier can't go, so I reckon I'll have to go an' buy fer both."

"Couldn't Mr. Renier — " Nancy hesitated. "Wouldn't the coroner's jury let 'im off?"

King shook his head.

"They ordered the sheriff to hold 'im until the grand jury meets an' the sheriff locked 'im up."

"In jail!" To Nancy the idea of a white man in jail was too horrible to think about.

"There wasn't nobody but his wife to stan' bail for 'im. The sheriff said he'd have to investigate. He believes her property is all settled on her children."

"Do you reckon they'll hang 'im, Hans?"

The store-keeper laughed.

"Fer killin' his own nigger! Well, I reckon thar ain't no law in the State o' Georgy kin keep a man from doin' as he's a mind with his own property. The colonel an' a few o' the other big-bugs may try to git one passed, but they hain't done it yit. Besides, they hain't no witnesses but niggers to prove Louis done it. The gal's leg wus chopped off an' the gal died, but — "

"Goddlemighty!" Nancy had covered her ears with her hands. Her face was as white as the home-spun tablecloth.

"Why, honey, is ye sick?" The man didn't in the least understand.

"Don't it make ye sick, Hans, to think o' choppin' that po' gal's leg off with an ax?"

"Shucks! She want nothin' but a nigger. They don't have tender feelin' like white folks."

"Well, it made me sick, that sick that I thought I should die; an' it made teacher Herrick sick too."

"What did Herrick have to say 'bout it?"

"He didn't say much. It was jes' his face! It got so white an' terrible lookin', while Anno Domini wus a-tellin' 'bout the colonel an' the jedge goin' over t' Renier's house an' then a-sendin' fer the coroner, that it scared me. When Anno got through, he jes' axed what the jedge said. She told 'im the jedge said it wus an awful deed, but it would be mighty hard to convict anybody on a nigger's testimony. Then Mr. Herrick jes' paid fer his things an' left the sto'."

"Of course, they can't convict Louis when they don't receive a nigger's testimony in the courts. It's all durn foolishness, holdin' him in jail ontil the gran' jury meets, anyhow. The colonel jest sent fer the coroner fer spite."

"Fer spite?" It was a new word for Nancy to hear associated with Colonel Twiggs's name.

"Yes, Louis says he al'ays did have a spite agin 'im, 'specially since he made Dick Fulton pay five thousan' dollars fer that boy Tom. Now —"

His wife lifted her hand and stopped him.

"Here comes the boy, Hans. He's named fer the colonel's brother an' he's boun' to take their part."

"He's adzactly right," King answered, in a lower tone. "It's a good thing t' keep on the right side o' rich folks." Then he called out. "Ye'd better hurry up, Davie. We've been a-layin' out a mighty fine trip down the river fer ye."

"Where do you want me to go?" David asked. He stopped in the door and stood looking across the table at his step-father.

Two years had wrought a great change in his appearance. He was almost a head taller than at the time of

his mother's second marriage, and there was a resolute set to his jaw that is seldom seen in so young a face. He had inherited his father's height but enough of Nancy's plumpness to round off the angles and give symmetry to his figure. His boldly marked features and the independent way he held his head were also from his Scotch blood, while his large brown eyes and his russet complexion, like his waving brown hair, came from his mother. His clothes were homespun as well as home-made, and his feet were bare; but, for all that, there was no suggestion either of vulgarity or the ordinary. If he were not the son of a gentleman, at least he was the child of honest parents, and it was stamped on every feature.

"He wants t' take ye to Savanny with 'im t'-morrow, honey." Nancy was very proud of her handsome, manly son, and did all in her power to keep him on friendly terms with his step-father. Besides having a cheerful, peace-loving disposition, she had absolute confidence in King's promises to educate the boy.

"Are you going to that nigger auction?" David still kept his eyes fixed on the store-keeper.

"That I be, an' I lay off t' buy mo' than one nigger," King replied, patting his belt proudly. "Ef I kin pick up a likely gal fer my price, ye wont see yo' mammy a-bendin' over the wash-pot no mo' — " At last he had touched the right chord in the boy's nature. Hansford was quick to see the change in David's face, and went on: "Nor frizzlin' in the summer time over the ironin'-board an' the kitchen fire. 'Fore long ye'll see yo' mammy a lady, Davie."

"What time will we have to start?" the boy asked, and his face was almost smiling as he slipped into his place at the table.

Now David was no fool. While he put not the slightest confidence in King's promises of an education for himself, he was willing to test his good intentions towards his mother. He knew the man was fond of Nancy, liked to see her neat, comely figure, to eat the good meals she set before him, to hear his customers

praise the air of cheerful cleanliness she had produced about the place, and, most of all, the solid prosperity her coming had brought.

After Hansford answered David, they began to discuss Louis Renier and the crime of which he stood accused. The facts were these. A young negro woman — if a girl of seventeen can be called a woman — had died under suspicious circumstances. She was the sister of a certain boy Tom, the husband of Susan, and both husband and wife were the property of two minors, Decatur and Ruth Fulton. As his owners were away from the county Tom appealed to their guardian to have his sister's death investigated. Hence the reason why the colonel and the judge, after a visit to their unpopular neighbor, called in the coroner.

This official, on making his appearance, had in his company his jury of twelve men, a constable, the sheriff, and several other personages, among whom was Hans King, Mrs. Peter Marschalk and her daughter Mattie. The coroner was in the lead and he stopped first at the meat-block by the door of the smoke-house.

Having questioned and cross-questioned various grown-up negroes, all human chattels and incompetent as witnesses before the law, the coroner rode to the quarter and entered the cabin of Granny Tildy, the oldest slave on the plantation. Besides the original investigators, quite a crowd had collected by this time, and they all followed at the heels of the horses of the official party. Among these was Mr. Louis Renier, the owner of the plantation and the only white person on the place, for his wife and children — so he stated in answer to a question from the jury — had the day before crossed the Savannah River. Mr. Renier had for his especial companions the constable, the sheriff and Hansford King.

The cabin door was opened by the old slave. Crippled by rheumatism and bent almost double by the weight of years, when she saw the gentlemen entering her home, she hastened to draw forward her one poor apology for an easy chair, wiping the bottom with her apron. But the coroner, be it said to his credit, re-

called the withered form of his own black mammy and placing the chair beside the smouldering fire made the old woman take her seat in it. On a rude bed in the corner the dead girl was stretched. There was a half smile on her face and her hands were folded peacefully on her breast; but there was something else.

Beneath the skirt of her clean homespun dress the coroner and the twelve jurymen had to look. It was their duty. As many others as could squeeze into the little room, among whom were Hans King and Anno Domini, looked from different motives. Little Mattie alone drew back. We will follow her example.

There were three points on which all the negroes — remember they could not in the eyes of the law be witnesses, though they witnessed the deed from beginning to end — agreed. The girl had been a runaway; she had run away twice. As a punishment for her last offence she had been set, with the men of the plantation, to clear a heavily timbered tract of land, where her leg had accidentally been broken. She had been put in a wagon and hauled to the " big 'ouse."

From this last point no two of the stories were alike. Every negro readily swore to any and every question asked and as readily swore to the contrary. The answers of two were especially remarkable; those of Simon, the middle-aged driver, who was examined at the meat-block, and of Granny Tildy, who was unable to leave her cabin.

" Who cut Caroline's leg off, Simon? " the coroner asked the negro driver, standing before the smoke-house door.

" I dunno, Mahse Coroner. 'Fore Gawd I dunno. I helped stretch de gal on dat meat-block an' de nex' t'ing I knowed she wus jes' like I done tole you, her laig done chopped clean off."

" You saw nobody with an ax in his hands? "

" No, mahster, 'deed, I nuver. Nuver sot eyes on no ax."

" Where was your master, Mr. Renier, at the time the leg was chopped off? "

"Mahster! Oh, he wus in town, Mahse Coroner. Yesser, mahster wus in de city uv Agusty. He nuver got here ontel dat gal wus daid an' stiff, laid out in 'er gran'mammy's cabin."

"Simon, will you kiss the Bible and swear that your master was in town, didn't return until after dark, the day that Caroline died?"

"Yesser, Mahse Coroner, yesser. I'll kiss er stack er Bibles high as dat tree. 'Deed I will."

In the cabin the coroner spoke soothingly to the old negress.

"How did Caroline's leg happen to be cut off, granny?" was his first question.

"You kin say I done it, Mahse Coroner. Ef dey hang me, I'll thank Gawd t' go. Dey fotched the gal in an' stretched 'er out on dat bed. I knowed she wus daid, so I laid 'er out de best I could; I nuver axed no questions. Oh, good Lord, send all sinners t' hell!" She was looking straight at Louis Renier, the third generation of his blood she had cradled in her arms. She touched the sheriff's elbow. "Please, sir, Mahse Sheriff, ef you'll hang me, I'm ready t' go."

The sheriff shook his head. His throat seemed closed and his voice failed him. Then the old slave threw her apron over her head and began rocking to and fro after the manner of broken-hearted women the world over.

Then the colonel stepped from the cabin door and took a stick of red and white striped candy from his pocket. The little negro children swarmed around him, their white eyes rolled up at the tempting stick, their perfect teeth glistening like polished ivory.

"I'll tell you, mahster. I'll tell you," came in a chorus.

"What will you tell me?" the colonel asked, and he singled out a chubby little black girl about eight years old.

"Tell you who cut S'Calline's laig off. Ole mahster cut S'Calline's laig off. Yesser, he did, ole mahster cut S'Calline's laig clean off."

The colonel drew forth a second stick of candy and

putting it with the first held them both before the girl's eyes.

"What did your mahster say when he cut Caroline's leg off?" The colonel smiled kindly at the little girl. He had never been harsh with a child in his life.

"Ole mahster said S'Calline didn't need no doctor, he gwine t' fix 'er so she couldn't run away no mo'. He sarnt unc' Simon t' de wood-pile t' fotch de ax. Den he cut S'Calline's laig clean off."

There was a sound like the growl of a wild beast and Louis Renier made for the cabin door. The sheriff dragged him back and kept him out of the child's sight.

The colonel put a third stick with the first two. The little negress had never seen so much candy in all her life before.

"Who fotched the ax?" he asked.

"Unc' Simon," the child replied, her eyes glued to the three wonderful sticks of candy.

"Who cut S'Calline's laig off?" The colonel's accent was to the manner born.

"Ole mahster?" The child licked her lips, but her gaze did not waver.

"Whose laig did ole mahster cut off?"

"S'Calline's." The child was becoming impatient. She rose on the tips of her toes, then sank back sighing.

The colonel put four sticks of candy in the chubby brown hands of the little negress, then he looked at the coroner and the coroner looked back at the colonel.

"Well, gentlemen," said the coroner to his jury, "if you think the evidence of the prisoner's guilt is sufficient you can order the sheriff to hold him until the meeting of the grand jury; if not, he is dismissed."

"May it please yo' honor," said the foreman rising, — it was none other than the little Dutchman Peter Marschalk, who, like his fellow jurors, had been sitting on his heels in the corner of the rail fence, whittling a stick, — "May it please, yo' honor, we are agreed an' we order the sheriff to hold the prisoner for the grand jury."

The coroner turned to the sheriff but Louis Renier had begun to bluster.

" I'll have the law on you. I'll have the law on every last one of you. You ain't got one might of proof agin me, hain't questioned no witnesses but niggers; can't find none but niggers. It's all yo' doin's, colonel, an' I'll have the law on you. It was you who brought the judge over here an' made him send for the coroner. I'll have the law on you for it. I'll prove that you've got a spite agin me because I made Dick Fulton pay a fair price for Tom."

" My dislike dates further back than that, Louis," the colonel answered. He was wiping the candy from his fingers with his pocket handkerchief. " The price you set on Tom has nothing to do with it. Every man has a right to set a price on his own property. I dislike you because — you — have — gone — back — on — your — raising." The words dropped from the colonel's lips like lumps of molten lead. " You are the son of honest, God-fearing parents, who inherited their servants as I inherited mine. You have gone back on your raising and I shall do all in my power to force you to mend your ways, just as I would wish your father to treat my son, if he were living and I dead."

" But he ain't livin', colonel," Renier was beginning to whine. " He wouldn't treat your son as you treat me, if he was. Just think how bad he'd feel if he was alive! You know you wouldn't want your son to go to jail. Put your son in my place, colonel. If he'd done what you've tried to prove I've done, how would you treat him? "

The colonel raised his walking cane and his eyes flashed.

" I'd lay this cane across his back," he said.

Those who heard him say it did not doubt he would have kept his word. There were some — among them the coroner — who recalled the old general when aroused. They knew that Louis Renier was lucky to be sent to jail instead of having to face the colonel's wrath.

Renier made his preparations to leave home under the eyes of the constable. The sheriff waiting at the

front gate with the coroner looked thoughtfully after the colonel and the judge as they rode together down the avenue to the public road.

"I never saw the colonel look old before to-day," he remarked to the coroner. "I was real glad to see 'im flare up at Louis. It showed that even if he is getting old all the fire hasn't died out."

The coroner shook his head.

"The battle of Chepultepec was enough to age 'im," he answered. "Major Levi Twiggs was the baby of the family, and Mrs. Greenwood and the colonel always treated 'im more like a son than a brother. I reckon they haven't taken much pleasure in the general's victories since they got the news of the major's death."

"Somebody told my wife that Mrs. Beverly took on mightily when she got the news that her husband was killed, but when she heard of the major's death she took her two children and went over to comfort Mrs. Greenwood. She's good, Mrs. Beverly is, as well as pretty, I reckon. You don't find women who'll do like that every day. My son says Twiggs has stopped drillin' the boys at school."

"It's about like the general said, I reckon," the coroner said. "It was when Decatur was wantin' to go to West Point. The general said, 'War and slavery are about alike, very nice to hear about; but when you come down to the actual thing, they're both hell.'"

"He must have seen some of Renier's little projects," the sheriff suggested.

"He had. It was the night Renier's bloodhounds were shot on the camp ground. We had a long talk that night with the general and the colonel about Renier — are you off, Hans?" the coroner called, as the store-keeper passed on his way to the gate.

"Yes, I'm a-goin' t' Savanny in the mornin', so I'd better be a-movin', I reckon. So long!"

"Goin' t' spend at the nigger auction the money Mrs. Greenwood paid Nancy for the cabin on the bluff?" the sheriff asked, after King had passed out of hearing.

The coroner nodded.

"I suppose the colonel couldn't persuade her t' put the money up for David?"

"She got to crying and said that Hans had promised to educate the boy," the coroner replied.

"An' she believes him? Well, I reckon Peter Marschalk's wife is about right. She says every female critter is jes' obleeged to have a man to make a fool of herself about; but there's one good thing, we don't have no trouble like this with Hans. He's too stingy to mistreat his own property. He hires that old half-witted nigger, Gabe, from Renier and gets more work from him in one day than his master would in a week. The old nigger says he cusses 'im once in a while, but he gives 'im plenty to eat an' never strikes 'im. Hans is a rascal, but I reckon he ain't a brute."

CHAPTER VII

THE GREAT AUCTION IN SAVANNAH

THE star spangled banner, that flag which to-day is hailed the world over as the emblem of liberty, floated over the grand stand of the Savannah race course when the great auction sale of negro slaves took place, which for months had been widely advertised and talked about throughout the South and in the North too, for that matter, though not exactly in the same way. A gentleman, wishing to change his investments, advertised to sell at auction four hundred and thirty-six human chattels!

The opening day fell on the second of March. There was a driving rain that turned to sleet as it fell and the roar of the wind was terrific. March had come in like a lion, there was no mistaking it.

The race course was three miles out from the city. It had a fine level track and was almost entirely surrounded by forest, — giant live-oaks and magnolias, draped with long sweeping sprays of gray moss. Flanking the substantial grand stand was a long row of slight wooden sheds, built for the accommodation of the horses and carriages of the gentlemen visiting the races. It was under these sheds, without chairs, beds or other signs of comfort, that the slaves were huddled for more than a week before the sale began. There were four hundred and thirty-six and their prospective purchasers must have an opportunity to examine them before investing their money.

The auction was held in that long room of the grand stand, the front of which is always open and commands a view of the entire course. Near the centre of this room was a small raised platform about two and a half

feet high. On the back of it stood the desks of the entry clerks leaving room on the front for the auctioneer and the goods.

There were about two hundred buyers present on the first day and the sale was just beginning when David arrived. The terms were being announced.

"One-third cash, the balance in two equal annual instalments, bearing interest from the day of sale," called out the auctioneer, one Mr. Walsh, a large good-natured looking man, who might have been called fine-looking had it not been for the peely appearance of his red face, which reminded David of a potato that had been boiled in the same pot with a red cabbage.

"Now, gentlemen, this ain't no ordinary sale of no-count niggers," Mr. Walsh went on. "This is the opperchunity of yo' life. Mr. Butler inherits half of his father's estate an' wants t' change the investment. Tha ain't a nigger here sold for no fault; they ain't got no faults."

The buyers laughed at this sally of wit, lit fresh cigars, and pressed up closer around the platform. The mulatto usher pushed the first lot of goods to the front of the platform and went back into the adjoining room for more. The work was beginning in earnest. Mr. Walsh continued his harangue.

"Gentlemen, jes' cast yo' eyes over this first lot, numbers one, two, three and four in yo' catalogue. George, twenty-six years old, prime cotton hand; Sue, twenty-five years old, prime rice hand; John, six years old, boy child; Marthy, two years old, gal child. All well trained, sound, healthy — sold for no fault — jes' t' change Mr. Butler's investment. Now, what am I bid, gentlemen? What am I bid?"

There was a long pause. The men who were not smoking took occasion to eject copious quantities of tobacco juice into the small wooden boxes, half filled with sand, that were set about the floor.

"Now, gentlemen, what am I bid? Every one of you know good niggers when you see 'em. Why, I never seen as many nigger brokers together before in

my life. You come from every State in the South and some that ain't in the South. I can't tell you nothin' about niggers. There's T. C. Trowbridge, one of the best judges of niggers in the whole country. What'll you bid for this lot, Trowbridge? Nine hundred apiece?"

Mr. Trowbridge was a dark man, nervous in his movements. Now he chose to be very leisurely. He removed his cigar, and, while squinting one eye at the negroes on the auction block, allowed the smoke to curl from one corner of his mouth.

"Well, bein' as it's you, Walsh, an' considerin' the com-pli-ment," he drawled, "I'll bid two hundred apiece."

The crowd enjoyed the joke. A man on the outskirts chimed in:

"He floored you that time, Walsh!"

But Mr. Walsh was not floored. He smiled blandly at Mr. Trowbridge and winked at the crowd.

"Gentlemen, Trowbridge use to be a good judge of niggers, one of the very best in the country, but since John C. Calhoun has gone into partnership with William Lloyd Garrison, preachin' the insecurity of slave property, the nigger-traders of South Carolina are so scared they won't pay more for a nigger than his clothes are worth. Gentlemen, T. C. Trowbridge of the aristocratic city of Hamburgh, South Callina, has bid eight hundred dollars for these niggers' clothes. What am I bid for the niggers?"

The crowd howled with laughter. The auctioneer bowed his thanks and winked in the direction of Mr. Trowbridge's back.

"Three hundred apiece for the niggers, and their clothes!" cried a voice from the back of the room; David couldn't see the owner.

"Thank you, suh," said Mr. Walsh, bowing in the direction of the bidder. "I'm glad to find a gentleman who can't be scared by the wild talk of Garrison, Calhoun and Company."

The crowd jeered and the bidding went on, jumping

ten and twenty dollars at a time. Then there was a hush. No one answered the auctioneer's appeal. Down came his hammer, as he cried:

"Gone at two thousand four hundred and eighty for the lot— six hundred and twenty apiece to Mr.— Mr.—"

"Stamps is my name, Dick Stamps of Mississippi," the purchaser said, as he stepped upon the platform by the side of the entry clerk. He was a tall, cadaverous-looking man with a club nose and red side-whiskers. His trousers were tucked into the tops of his boots and a green velvet cap was dragged rakishly over one eye.

"Niggers is mighty high," Hans King remarked to Trowbridge.

"Them are the pickin's," Trowbridge replied. "You an' me's after the leavin's. There'll be plenty of them in a gang like this, an' they will be cheap enough."

"Shucks!" put in a red-faced man who had just elbowed his way to their side. "In three years' time niggers will be cheaper'n dirt. My congressman told me they aimed to git the slave-trade opened at the next session. When they do, by gum, we'll haul niggers over here so fast there won't be any left for seed in Africa."

The first lot of chattels having been removed, the usher pushed the second to the front of the platform.

"Gentlemen," Mr. Walsh cried promptly, "this sale is on the strictly family basis, and while a man's father and mother can't rightly be called his family, as Anson and Violet have expressed the wish to go with their son George, Mr. Butler hopes that the gentleman who bid in George and his family will buy his parents. What am I bid, Mr. Stamps, suh?"

Stamps turned from his conference with the entry clerk and looked the two old negroes over. Violet made a quick short courtesy, looking appealingly at him. Anson, his hat in his hand, bowed and scraped his foot and hastened to say:

"We ain't young, massa, but dar's heap er wurk left in us, sah. I's ruptured jes' like de books says, but I kin work, massa. I kin plow all day long en pick cotton. Why, massa, dey ain't no two niggers on de

plantation kin pick as much cotton as me an' Vi'let. Show massa yo' arm, Vi'let. Let 'im see yo' teeth. She ain't as po'ly as she looks, massa. She looked jes' dat a-way when I married 'er, massa, when we jumped over de broomstick together."

Stamps shook his head.

"I hain't got no use for old niggers," he said.

Anson and Violet could not give up. It was the supreme moment of their lives. Violet lifted her clasped hands imploringly. Anson stripped off his shirt to the waist.

"Look at de muscles in my back, massa — jes' as good an' strong as dey wus at twenty, sah. I's a prime cotton han', massa. I kin do evert'ing but lift de heavy baskets. An' I's a cobbler, too, massa. I kin make shoes an' boots —" He stooped down and felt the top of one of Stamps' boots. "I kin make boots jes' as good as dese massa's got on. Better buy us, massa! You'll git us cheap an' we'll work our fingers t' de bone."

"'Tain't likely anybody will bid against you, Mr. Stamps," the auctioneer said, speaking in an undertone.

"I wouldn't have 'em if you was t' give 'em to me," Stamps answered with a volley of swaggering oaths. "Not if you wus to set 'em down on my place free. I'd just have the trouble of buryin' 'em. I live in the Mississippi bottoms, the best cotton lands in the world, but it takes prime niggers t' work it," and he added, with a laugh and a significant wink at the crowd, "an' *they* don't last none too long, I kin tell you."

Violet dropped on her knees at his feet and lifted her hands in an agony of appeal.

"Dat boy is all I's got, massa. I had six, but dey's all been sol' away! For Gawd's sake buy us, massa. We'll —"

"Come, come, Violet!" It was the fierce looking little man David had seen passing back and forth, ordering the chattels, the usher, the entry clerks, the auctioneer — in short, everybody who could be ordered — and making himself generally conspicuous. Trow-

bridge told Hans that his name was Bryan. He was a Savannah negro-trader and had charge of the sale.

"Come, come, Violet," he said, and he dragged the old woman to her feet. "You musn't interrupt the sale. There's two hundred an' odd niggers to be sold to-day. Gentlemen can't be kept waitin' t' listen t' you an' Anson whine. Git on with the business, Walsh."

Walsh, his face a trifle less smiling, perhaps, went on.

"Mr. Stamps don't want 'em, gentlemen, — numbers five an' six in yo' catalogues. What am I bid? What am I bid?"

"Fifty apiece," cried the man with the red face. Then he grinned and winked at the crowd as he added: "I reckon that's mo'n they're worth."

"Now's yo' time," Trowbridge said, speaking to Hans. "Gentlemen won't want t' bid for 'em after hearin' 'em beg so hard. Better bid!"

"Seventy-five!" called the store-keeper.

"Eighty!" the red-faced man replied.

"Ninety!" Hans was feeling encouraged; no one else was bidding.

Anson touched the auctioneer's arm timidly. Mr. Walsh looked around. The old woman's eyes were streaming with tears and Anson's voice choked when he tried to whisper in the auctioneer's ear.

Walsh made a last effort. After all, there was a soft spot in the region of his heart.

"Gentlemen," said he, "since the hardness of Mr. Stamps' — soil makes Violet an' Anson useless for him, ain't there somebody in this crowd who could buy the whole lot, George's family an' the two old folks? I'm sure Mr. Stamps would be willin' to —"

"I don' know about that," interrupted the individual of the velvet cap. "I come here to buy niggers; I didn't come a-tradin'."

The old negro raised his eyes to heaven. Violet was past caring. Mr. Walsh went on.

"Ninety dollars was the last bid, gentlemen —"

"One hundred and fifty," Trowbridge prompted, and the store-keeper shouted it forth.

" I reckon I'll wait for the slave trade to open," the gentleman with the red face remarked, as he pushed a fresh chew of tobacco into his cheek, and sauntered off.

The auctioneer's hammer fell. It was the proudest moment of the store-keeper's life as he walked up to pay for his newly-acquired property. The dream of twenty years was realized! He had become a slave owner! When he came back the negroes were following him. He turned them over to his step-son and invited Trowbridge to go down stairs to the bar.

David laid his hand on the old woman's shoulder.

" Don't cry," he said. There was sympathy in his voice and a suspicion of tears in his eyes. " He's my step-father and — and he's a good feeder."

It was the only bit of consolation he could offer, and he felt thankful that he could truthfully give that. He had been accustomed to slavery all his life. He had never dreamed that it was wrong. The people that he loved and respected above all others owned slaves by the thousands. Yet, to-day, as he looked on and listened to the pleadings of the two old negroes, a doubt crept into his mind and his young heart was filled with an overwhelming pity.

When Hans and Trowbridge returned from the bar downstairs, a group of young unmarried men — " bucks " they called them — were standing near the platform, being auctioned off one at a time.

" This seems like a chance t' git Renier's young fiel' han'," the store-keeper remarked, to Trowbridge.

" You might bid on 'em, they're all marked prime," the Carolina negro-trader replied, referring to his catalogue.

So Hans began to bid and finally a tall young brown-skinned fellow, designated in the catalogue as " Jeffrey, twenty-two years old, prime cotton hand," was knocked down to him. The negro came smiling to meet his purchaser. He had no home ties, his father and mother and sisters and brothers, if he had any, had been sold, perhaps years before, and Hans was by no means the worst looking man among the buyers.

" Tank you fer buyin' me, massa," he said, standing respectfully before the store-keeper, his hat in his hand. " I's strong an' healthy, an' I'll do my bes' t' please you, massa." Then he looked down and began to run his hand around his battered hat. " Ef you would buy Dorcas, massa? Dorcas is de gal I loves." With the declaration something very like manly independence came to him and he lifted his head and looked King squarely in the eyes.

" I loves Dorcas, massa, an' Dorcas loves me. I love 'er better anybody, massa, — never kin love ernother gal half as much. Please buy Dorcas, massa! She's a prime cotton han' an' kin weave an' spin an' wash an' i'un — please buy 'er, massa."

" Whar's the gal? " Hans asked. " Go fetch 'er here an' let me see 'er." As the negro moved off towards the adjoining room, Hans turned to Trowbridge. " I've got five hundred left over an' two hundred of Renier's. Maybe, if the gal is prime an' they don't run 'er up too high on me, I might git 'er an' let 'em marry. I could pay the money back to Renier."

" Or Renier might take 'er off yo' hands," the negro-trader suggested in agreement. " Here she comes," he added, as he glanced towards the door through which Jeffrey had disappeared. " She's a fine-lookin' gal, a mighty fine-lookin' gal. If she ain't run up too high you better git 'er. If Renier don't take 'er off yo' han's an' you want yo' money back, why, I — "

The store-keeper interrupted him.

" I've work fer ernother fiel' han', I reckon. Vi'let kin stay at the house an' help Nannie."

The sight of the two young negroes walking towards him had fired his ambition afresh. He saw himself seated on the porch of his little store, or perhaps it was a more pretentious house, ordering a gang of his own slaves in the cotton field. The two old negroes were worth all that he had given for them, but these young people — wonderful possibilities opened before him!

" Well, yo' gal looks soun' an' healthy," he said, and

the expression of his face was almost kindly. "Make 'er show off 'er good p'ints."

Dorcas, so pleasantly encouraged, smiled and dropped a low courtesy.

"T'ank you, massa, t'ank you, sah," and Jeffrey grinned and scraped his foot, feeling that his sweetheart was already saved. "Pull off yo' turban, Dorcas, an' let massa see dar ain't no scars on yo' head. Jes' feel what good saft wool, massa. She's healthy, massa, comes uv a healthy stock. Let massa feel de muscles in yo' arms, Dorcas! Show 'im yo' teeth — "

So Jeffrey made her go through all the tests required by purchasers of human chattels to show their strength and soundness. He made her walk, jump, run, stoop over and lift her weight. Whenever the store-keeper expressed himself as satisfied, the poor fellow would become radiant, thanking him for both himself and his sweetheart.

When the time for Dorcas' sale came, behold, Dorcas walks out and after her comes her mother and her father and her eleven sisters and brothers, for the sweetheart of Jeffrey was the eldest of twelve children, a fact that Jeffrey had not considered worthy to be mentioned.

"You reckon they'll sell all that gang with 'er?" Hans asked in consternation.

"It's the gal's mammy an' daddy, an' she aint married, I reckon they will," Trowbridge answered.

"I reckon my seven hundred won't stan' much show," the store-keeper remarked disconsolately. Then a new thought struck him and he turned eagerly to the negro-trader. "You buy the lot an' sell me the gal."

"Shucks, you don't know a little bit about this business," was the negro-trader's contemptuous rejoinder. "Look at the daddy an' mammy of that gang. They're not thirty-five an' as strong an' healthy as they were at twenty. Them's the kind of pickin' the broadcloth quality have come here to buy. They don't have to think of profits. Both yo' pile an' mine put together wouldn't touch the price them niggers will fetch."

After a first timid call Hans was silent, for the bids

soared up in the thousands, beside which his few hundred seemed small indeed. So Jeffrey's sweetheart was knocked down with her family and would go to the fertile valleys of North Carolina, the chattel of a rich tobacco planter.

"I did the best I could for you, Jeffrey," Hans said, when the young negro came up after the sale, and there was genuine sorrow in his tone, perhaps for the boy's disappointment, perhaps for the wrecking of his own air-castles.

"T'ank you, massa, tank you, sah," the boy repeated, bowing and scraping his foot. "You's mighty kind t' me, but — but — it's berry hard." He put his hands over his face and sobbed like a very child.

In the adjoining room David could see Dorcas sitting with her shawl over her face.

CHAPTER VIII

YALLER NED'S CAVE

"TELL mother I'm goin' to church," David called back. He put his hand on the top of the worm fence, and, vaulting over, went across the field, deaf to his step-father's shouts and threats.

"You can make your nigger sweep out your durned old store and coop your chickens for market. I won't!" he muttered.

Then he stuck his hands in his pockets and struck out, whistling, across the fields and through the woods that shaded the neighborhood road which led to Rosney Chapel. His feet were bare and he was without a coat. But what cared David? Never in his life had he been made to think of his dress—at least, never but once. That was so long ago that he had almost forgotten it. If he had recalled it, he would have dismissed the thought with a shrug of contempt. They were only Tutwylers! Although they lived in a big house in Augusta, went to the Springs in the summer and even traveled abroad, David was a welcomed guest in the colonel's home and had sat at his table. For either privilege Eusebius Tutwyler would have traded his eyes.

None of these thoughts crossed the boy's mind this morning. He was going to church and would see Annie Laurie, and Twiggs and Margaret. He moved as though he had wings on his feet. At the end of the week school would close and Mrs. Beverly would take her children north to visit Jack Clinton; the colonel and Mrs. Greenwood would go to the Springs, and Annie Laurie—David hadn't heard the Herricks' plans for the summer.

He halted where the corduroy road curved along the banks of Butler's creek, and looked, smiling, down at the

water. A pond-lily with freshly opened petals, moved by a ripple, seemed to nod and smile back at him. On a bank of soft green moss at the side of the road he saw a cluster of fly-catchers and a devil's snuff-box. A gray squirrel glided down to the water's edge and sat washing its face. Then it caught sight of the boy and scurried up a tree, chattering. David laughed with the sheer joy of living. The breath of June was in the air and there was neither envy nor malice in his heart.

In the grove around Rosney he could see neither the Beverly, the Twiggs nor the Greenwood carriage, but the colonel's horse was there. So he knew at once that the ladies of the family had taken advantage of the cool day and driven in to hear a last sermon in town. When he went in church he looked around for Annie Laurie. Mrs. Herrick sat alone, and the teacher sat across the aisle on the men's side, but there was no sign of the little girl. She also had gone with Margaret to town.

At the end of the service he spoke to the colonel.

"Where are you going for dinner, my boy?" the old gentleman asked.

"Home, I reckon, sir." David's lips trembled in spite of himself. Besides a scolding from the storekeeper, he had braved his mother's tears all for nothing.

"If you can stand the company of an old man I shall be very glad to have you dine with me." The colonel placed his hand kindly on his shoulder and David looked up into his face and smiled, just as he had years before, when the gentleman asked if he would like to go to school.

Out under the crab-apple tree he untied the colonel's horse from the swinging limb and held it for him to mount.

"Come, jump up behind, my boy!" The colonel held out one foot.

"I reckon I'm too big for that now, colonel," David answered, smiling.

"God bless my soul!" the old gentleman exclaimed in surprise. He glanced down at the boy and his eyes widened with admiration. "You are growing up," he

said. "You've got the Hamilton figure, a Scotch Highlander through and through. You're the fourth generation of your blood to ride double with me. As a little boy I use' to ride behind your great-grandfather on my father's war-horse; a few years later your grandfather and I use' to go fox-hunting on the same horse; and your father — " He threw back his head in a hearty laugh. "Why, James ran away from his mother and went fox-hunting, riding behind me, before he was six years old. I reckon you're not too big to ride double yet. Come, hop up!"

He held out his polished boot again and David touched it an instant with the toes of one foot as he flung the other over the back of the thorough-bred hunter.

After dinner they went out on the front piazza and the colonel called for a light. As he was about to put the cigar between his lips, he stopped and turned to David.

"Do you smoke?" he asked, extending his open cigar case.

David shook his head.

"The general told Twiggs and me that a boy wouldn't get his full growth if he began to use tobacco before he was sixteen," he explained.

"That was my father's rule," the colonel assented. "None of his boys were stunted; we were all over six feet."

Later the butler, in a suit of linen as white as his master's marseilles, brought out a tray and set it on a stand at the colonel's elbow. The old gentleman glanced at the boy, and asked humorously:

"How did the general settle the julep question for you and Twiggs?"

"He said it wouldn't hurt us to chew the mint," David answered, with just a suspicion of a twinkle in his eyes.

The colonel laughed; he liked the boy's deference towards his elders as much as he admired his sturdy independence. Then he motioned to the two tall glasses green with fresh mint.

"Hand the tray to your Mahse David, Shadrach," he said.

So they sat, the colonel sipping his julep and David chewing mint. The subjects they discussed were those which the thinking men of that day and locality were talking about, the latest news from the newly discovered gold fields of California, the probability that yellow fever would become an epidemic in New Orleans during the summer, Zachary Taylor as president and which of his promises the politicians would allow him to keep, and slavery, — the never ending, always irritating subject.

This last topic the colonel introduced by asking David about his trip to Savannah. The boy gave a full account of his visit, describing the negro-trader and the auctioneer so accurately that the colonel laughed heartily and said he should know them if he met them in the streets. Then he described the sale of Anson and Violet. Here the old gentleman's face became grave. When David went on and told about Dorcas and Jeffrey, he left his chair and began to tramp up and down the long piazza, his hands behind his back and his chin sunk down into the bosom of his shirt. The boy, realizing that he disturbed his friend, would have stopped, but the colonel made him go on.

" It is such scenes as that," he declared, resuming his seat as David finished the story, " such exhibitions of heartlessness that give color to the worst statements of the abolitionists. I haven't a doubt those very scenes will be described in the newspapers throughout the North; perhaps the politicians will use them to begin afresh their agitation against slavery."

For a time neither spoke. Finally the colonel, remembering the presence of his young guest, glanced towards him and found his brows knit in deep thought.

" What are you thinking about, my boy? " he asked.

David started and his brow cleared, but a deep breath escaped him that sounded, to his host, very much like a deep sigh. The boy hesitated, then asked a little doubtfully:

" Colonel, is slavery — is slavery right? "

For the first time in his life the colonel's eyes wavered

After David had gone into the long room, which, with its books, its portraits, and its polished mahogany furniture, looked cool and restful in the hottest of summer days, the colonel called to him.

"Take William Wirt's *Life of Patrick Henry*, my boy. You'll find it on my desk. I laid it aside for you."

When he came out, two books under his arm, the colonel rose, patted him affectionately on the head, and walked with him to the top of the steps.

"Come again, my boy, whenever you have an opportunity. We are always glad to see you. If you want any books during the summer while we are away, why, come right over. Shadrach is always here. Good by. Give my regards to Nancy and tell her I am glad to hear she is well."

As David went out the front gate, the colonel turned to Judge Courtny.

"That's the most remarkable boy, sir. Whenever I see a boy like that I feel doubly proud of my country. Five years ago he was the veriest little country cracker you ever saw; James brought him to town for the first time. Now, look at him! Properly dressed, there isn't a parlor in the country he wouldn't grace. He talks better grammar than I do, after less than two years' schooling. It is all his own work. I never see him, driving back and forth to town, unless he has a book or newspaper in his hands. Twiggs Beverly tells me that he keeps up with him in arithmetic. He's a remarkable boy, sir. As sure as I live to get back to this country another fall, I'll have him go to school if I have to buy him, sir."

"Buy him?" the judge inquired. For a moment he was in doubt about the boy's identity.

"Yes; Hans King won't give up his labor for nothing. That's one of the things he married Nancy for and she is completely under his thumb. But Hans King would sell his soul to the devil for money. That's the only way I can ever get James Hamilton's son a proper education. Next fall I shall buy him, sir."

David, all unconscious of what was in store for him,

walked whistling down the road. On the top of a little rise he stopped for an instant and stood gazing across the cotton fields of the Twiggs and Greenwood plantations. It was well worth stopping to look at! Hundreds of acres of the cotton plant in perfection! The emerald green of the dense foliage was splashed thick with great cup-shaped blossoms in cream, in deep yellow, in rose-pink and in crimson, matching in shade the colors of a gorgeous sunset. Beyond the cotton was a bank of cypress and live-oaks. The sight of that line of darker green made the boy homesick, for he knew it marked the flow of the Savannah River. He climbed to the top of the rail fence and sat for a moment undecided. Then he dropped down in the field and set out, as the crow flies, for the lower ford.

Before he reached the plantation road, — the road down which five years earlier he had watched Decatur Fulton disappear with his hounds, — he noticed a soft grey cloud floating just above the tree-tops. He looked again. Ah! He stopped in his tracks! There was the dead pine, like a tall white shaft, a sumach bush was growing in the top, and the cloud was smoke. His father's story of the old slave, Yaller Ned, came back to him. He glanced up at the sun, then turned down a cotton row towards the dead pine.

From the field he walked straight into the woods. Knowing that wherever the path was it would be a blind one and hard to find, he plunged in, breaking his way through the tangle of blackberry briars, yellow jasmine and muscadine vines. As he went on, the undergrowth became less dense; then he struck a winding path. In one of its turns he fancied that he had lost his bearings, but it turned again and the barkless trunk of the dead pine loomed before him. In a clump of huckleberry bushes the path became less distinct, and finally disappeared.

David stopped with a feeling of irritation against himself; after all, it was only a path made by berry pickers. He peered through the trees and caught a glimpse of the top of the pine. The smoke was still

there, which meant a fire; and somebody had to get in to make it. So he turned and started out again, determined to find a way into the cave. At that moment he caught sight of the limb of an oak, with withering leaves. It was beyond the clump of berry bushes, lying against a thicket of briars and vines just as though blown there by a recent storm.

Now the boy stopped to think. There had been no recent storm, which could tear a limb like that from a live-oak. He pushed through the bushes and lifted the brush end.

There, staring him in the face, was the mouth of the cave. In the mind of a person less accustomed to the woods and the habits of wild animals, there might have been some question. With David there was none. Though the opening in the earth was so low that he had to go on his hands and knees, he knew it had been used, quite recently, by a man; for only a man would seek to hide his tracks by strewing dead leaves and straw over them.

He crawled cautiously down the narrow tunnel, stopping every few steps to listen. Catching the odor of smoke and burning leaves, he dropped down flat on his stomach and lay, holding his breath and listening intently. There was not a sound, so he crept on.

The opening, into which he looked, was like a large room. The floor beneath his hands was clay, and as soon as his eyes became accustomed to the light he could see that the smooth walls had been dug out by human hands. Through the branches and leaves of the bushes that shielded the larger opening he could see the skyline and caught the sound of the swish of the river. So he guessed at once that the cave was in a bluff on the river's bank, and, whatever its original size, had been shaped by Yaller Ned and those who came after him. He noticed that a fire was built in the rude fireplace, whose rough chimney connected with the hollow tap-root of the pine. There were a few tin dishes, a pile of boxes and bags in one corner, several rough benches and a table, while near the door on both sides of the room were

long low pens filled with dried leaves and pine straw, beds for the slaves, as David knew without being told.

He walked to the bluff entrance and peered through the cluster of bushes and vines that grew on the little ledge in front of it. The bank was steep, and the cave was near the top of it. At the water's edge, perhaps a hundred yards below, he saw a negro drag a canoe aground and tie it to the overhanging limb of a cottonwood tree. He heard voices and, glancing up stream he saw, climbing the path towards the cave, five men, two whites and three negroes. The leader was Mr. Herrick.

He drew back and hurried to the little tunnel by which he had entered. Here a second thought struck him, and he stepped into one of the low pens and buried himself under the roughened straw and dried leaves. For the first time in his life he was glad that his hair was dark instead of flaxen like Twiggs Beverly's.

The men were entering the cave. David held his breath.

"What made Anson and Violet change their minds, Jeffrey?" Mr. Herrick's voice asked, and David knew he was speaking to Louis Renier's new slave.

"Well, massa, I spicions it wus some words dat Unc' Charlie, Miss Greenwood's butler, let drap. Aunt Vi'let wus high up fer gwine, untel Unc' Charlie he come over ter sten' de right han' uv feller-ship t' 'em. After dat, I noticed she jes' kept a gittin' weaker-kneed an' weaker-kneed in 'er talk 'bout gwine. Las' Friday night she an' Unc' Anson went over t' return Unc' Charlie's visit, an' Sat'dy mornin' dey both up'd an' sed dey'd 'cided not t' come. I jes' nat'ly spicioned hit wus some word dat Unc' Charlie let drap."

"That's the way it is, Dr. Thayer." It was Mr. Herrick's voice again, and David knew why the face of the second white man had seemed familiar. He had seen Dr. Thayer in Augusta. "We had this man Charles half way out of the State and there was no danger from pursuit, when he deliberately walked into a jail and gave himself up and asked to have his mistress notified."

"Yes, massa," Jeffrey answered. "Dat's jes' what

Unc' Charlie tol' Aunt Vi'let. He said when he fus started out he 'magined when he got up Norf de folks what wus 'suadin' 'im fer t' come would give 'im a big 'ouse, an' er carriage an' horses, an' er plenty uv niggers t' wait on 'im. When he foun' out he'd have t' work like po' white trash, fer de very salt he put in his bread, he jes' turned in at de fus jail he seed an' axed 'em t' sen' word t' his ol' Miss."

"Well, Jake," said Mr. Herrick, "I suppose it's the same with your family. They prefer the flesh pots of Egypt to all that freedom has to give?"

"Yessah, Mahse Herrick, I 'spects it is, sah. I dunno nothin' 'bout dem fraish pots what you mentions, but ef dey hain't got no meal an' lasses in 'em I don't reckon S'Lucy ner S'Calline is worryin' 'bout gittin' 'em. Dey's jes like Unc' Anson an' Aunt Vi'let. Dey say dey knows Mahse Robertson, dey's sho he's de top 'er de pot, but dey dunno nothin' 'bout dem folks whar you wants 'em t' go. Dey got de same noshuns wid Unc' Charlie. Ef dey has t' work, dey wanter make sho dey's workin' fer quality."

"You are all alone, Jesse?" Mr. Herrick was evidently speaking to the third negro.

"Yessah, Mahse Herrick, mammy said I mought 's well come. She says I's young an' have t' sow my tares an' thistles, an' she 'lowed you's jes 'bout as good er white man as she knows t' help me plow 'em in. Yessah, Mahse Herrick, dat's jes' what mammy says, sah."

David heard a sound such as Mr. Herrick was accustomed to make when a child persisted in missing its lesson.

"Everything is ready, boys, so you may as well be going," was the school-teacher's next remark. "Jesse, you will go in the boat with Simmons, and, Jake, you will go with Jeffrey. I have only a dollar apiece for you; it was all that Dr. Thayer and I could get. We are also short of arms. You know the supply we expected last week did not arrive. You will take the gun, Jesse, and Jeffrey the pistol. Now, remember, boys, I caution you

against violence and theft. Every man has a right to two things, his life and his liberty. That is why I give you the money and the weapons. Don't use either until forced. Simmons will take you down the river and place you in the hands of friends, who in turn will pass you on to other friends until you cross the Ohio River. From there you will be taken to Canada, where you will be free and safe. Don't forget that the signal of all abolitionists is the cry of the hoot-owl. Whenever you hear a hoot-owl three times, day or night, you will know it is the signal of friends. Good by boys."

The boy hidden under the leaves and straw knew that Herrick was shaking hands with each negro in turn. Then Jeffrey asked:

"Ain't we gwine t' stop by Norf Calliny fer Dorcas, massa?"

"No, Jeffrey, everything is arranged. Dorcas will join you in Canada."

"Yessah, massa, I knows you thinks she will, but Dorcas is a mighty skeery gal; she ain't use t' gwine fer frum home, massa."

"She's in the hands of friends. She'll meet you in Canada, Jeffrey," the teacher assured him.

Then David heard them all go out. He waited and was about to leave his hiding place, when the teacher's voice became distinct again and he knew he was returning with his white companion. They moved about the cave talking, but finally took their seats and Thayer began to smoke. David knew that Herrick did not use tobacco.

Here they held a long conversation, but to David, though he was cramped by keeping rigidly still and almost smothered by the pungent odor of the pine straw, it seemed short. In the first place, he learned that more than a hundred slaves had been passed safely to friends in the North since the teacher's arrival in Richmond County; that Herrick was not the teacher's real name, at least not the name Dr. Thayer called him by; and that they had known each other from childhood. Lastly, both the teacher and Thayer had been made to

leave Tennessee owing to the confessions of a slave who had been captured and returned to his master. From Tennessee they had fled to a certain anti-slavery society, with headquarters in Philadelphia, whose agents they still were.

Here they began to exchange experiences, telling of their numerous adventures in shipping slaves, a "holy mission," the teacher called it. He spoke of it as David had heard the preacher at Rosney that day speak of the ministry. It was an interesting conversation, and the boy under the leaves and straw almost heaved a sigh of regret when he heard them putting out the fire and making preparations to leave.

"You see I never allow the boys to use this entrance," the teacher remarked. "Simmons is the only one that knows about it. We dug it as a means of escape in case of possible discovery. I am careful not to have a direct path to it and not to permit the grass or bushes around outside to become trampled. You see how I have profited by our experience in Tennessee."

"I see that you have a better field," Thayer replied. "You would never have been able to run off a hundred slaves in Tennessee without being spotted. The planters about here have so many that they don't miss them. It is only when you strike one with a few dozen that they seem to take the trouble to hunt them up. If they should use the hounds — "

"Ah, that's just where I get ahead of them. I make the fugitives come by the river and there is nothing for the hounds to follow. They go to some one of the ferries, are picked up by Simmons, or row down by themselves. The hounds track them to the ferry; then they are lost."

David knew from the sound of their voices that they had both entered the tunnel. He lifted himself on his elbow, listened, then rose to his feet and shaking the leaves and straw from his clothes followed them.

When he came into the outer air the moon was shining and he knew it must be at least nine o'clock. More than an hour later he reached the store, but he did not get

scolding that he expected. The whole place was in uproar. Louis Renier's boy Jeffrey had run away, l Renier had come by with Tom Butler's blood-nds to get Hans King to join in the hunt.

CHAPTER IX

FOR BONNIE ANNIE LAURIE

FOR nearly five weeks David said nothing about what he had learned in the cave. It is true he drove by the colonel's on his way from town the following Thursday with the intention of telling him. Shadrach came to the door.

"Mahster's gone t' de Burke plantation, Mahse David, — lef' yistiddy in de cool of de day," the negro said. "An' Miss an' Miss Anna's spendin' de day in town wid Miss Louisa, but ef you want er book, jes step right in de liberry; mahster done lef' pertic'lar orders, sah."

Here, bowing and smiling, he turned to usher the boy down the wide hall and into the library. Now David's feet were bare, he was in his shirtsleeves and was carrying his wagon whip, a leather lash fastened to an unpeeled hickory stick. The negro wore a full suit of spotless linen and his feet were covered by well-fitted, polished boots. If he felt the difference, he did not show it. He treated this boy with the same friendly courtesy and showed the same desire to serve him as the boys with Twiggs blood in their veins. Like master, like slave! Yet the pride of the planters of the Old South — they call them aristocrats — has become a proverb. Theirs was not the pride of purse.

"No, sah, mahster ain't comin' back befo' he goes t' de Springs. He'll jes' drive across an' take de steam-cyars at Brazelia t' jine Miss an' de young ladies. You ain't gwine t' take no books t'-day, Mahse David?" Shadrach's manner was the essence of regret. "Well, dey's right dar in dat liberry, an' I's right here t' open dis do' whenever you's a mind t' take 'em, sah."

For several days after this visit David was undecided what to do, but when he heard that more negroes had disappeared from plantations in the neighborhood, two belonging to Mr. Robinson and four to Mrs. Whittemore, he determined to write the colonel at once. He had actually begun the letter when Hans brought the news that a boy, answering to the description of Jeffrey, had been caught in North Carolina, and Renier was going up to take a look at him. David put his letter aside to wait for developments.

He had just six days to wait, three for Renier to reach the jail in North Carolina and three more for him to get back. They had finished supper. Hans was arranging goods in the front counter, while David and Anson were unloading the wagon at the back door and stacking sacks of flour in one corner, when Louis Renier pushed open the door and tramped in.

"Gosh!" Hans exclaimed, as he scrambled up from his knees before the counter. "You back a-ready? Well, you have been quick! Did you fetch yo' nigger with you?"

"You can bet your bottom dollar I did, all that's left of him," Renier replied, with a volley of oaths. "He's got all his hands and feet — I never cut none of 'em off this time — but he knows jes' how fancy carving feels, I reckon."

He had stopped full in the candle-light and David saw that he was wearing both a pistol and a bowie knife in his belt and had a cow-hide in one hand. He touched the store-keeper on the shoulder.

"I want that barrel of tar you've got under the shed," he said. "I've brought the feathers."

"Tarnation!" Hans exclaimed, staring. "What air you up to now?"

Renier grinned, and he looked, at least to one person in the store, like the devil.

"Goin' to have a little celebration to-night. I've invited the torch-bearers to meet at this store — goin' to trespass on your hospitality for a while. Then we'll give Mr. Herrick a little surprise, I reckon."

"The teacher, Herrick!" The expression of the storekeeper's face was past describing. His eyes were almost popping from his head.

Renier laughed and the sound was not musical.

"That's the bird! The accomplished gentleman, who the biggest bugs in the county picked out to teach their precious children! Such a fine gentleman, too fine to speak to me in the big road! Told Jake Howard hangin' was too good for me and said he wouldn't have my children at Tupelo Academy, even if Colonel Twiggs asked them to come! Said he —"

"Goddlemighty, Louis, ye can't tar an' feather a man because he won't speak to ye! Ye can't —"

"I can tar an' feather 'im when he steals my niggers an' puts guns in their han's —" He drew the pistol from his belt and threw it on the counter. "Look at that! A bran' new five-shooter!"

"Whar did it come from?" Hans asked. His eyes had not entirely resumed their accustomed position.

"My nigger had it. That's how they happened to catch 'im; he went in town to buy cartridges! Jeffrey ain't the only one, I can tell you! Every nigger that's left this county, Burke, Scriven, Columbia, around Beach Island — an' the devil an' Herrick only knows where else — have gone off the same way with a pistol like that! I've got it straight, don't you fret! The colonel an' the judge ain't here to call the coroner this time; they wouldn't do it if they were. Wait until I rip open the nest in Yaller Ned's cave — on the Greenwood plantation, at that! The colonel's a nice one to pry into his neighbor's yards, now, ain't he? Can't even keep his own do' steps clean! Well, we'll sweep 'em for him. I've sent word to every overseer in the neighborhood, an' a lot who ain't overseers, to meet me here at eleven o'clock sharp. At twelve I mean to be presentin' Herrick an' his wife a nice new tar coat, spangled with feathers. Maybe we'll touch off the little gal's yaller hair before we finish; they're all —"

He was interrupted by four men who came trooping into the store one behind the other, a tall, broad man,

a square man, a fat man, and a thin man, but all of them had hard determined faces, the faces of men who earned their bread forcing others, men and women, to labor, — plantation overseers in the Old South.

"You're on time, boys!" Renier greeted them with a sort of hearty condescension. He had sunk below the level of even the lowest of them, but because of his father's respectability he still claimed, and they showed him, a certain amount of deference.

"I brought the feathers and Hans has the tar. We'll take them over in my wagon —"

David could wait no longer. He had heard enough. His face was white and his knees trembled so that he staggered, as he went down the back steps of the store. He had made up his mind what had to be done and he knew who would do it.

"That's enough, Uncle Anson," he told the old negro. "You can go to bed. I'll roll the wagon under the shed and lock up the stable."

If he heard the negro's muttered thanks as he shuffled off across the yard to his cabin, he did not answer. Neither did he reply to his "good night," an unusual omission for David. He lifted the heavy wagon tongue to his shoulder, threw his strength against the front axle, and, backing it through the lot gate, left it in place under the shed. When he carried the stable keys to the little room behind the store, he went over and kissed his mother.

"Air ye goin' to bed right away, Davie?" Nancy asked, smiling up into his face.

"I thought I'd go down to the wash-hole and take a swim first," he glanced down at his dusty hands and feet. "I'm pretty dirty, and I never feel clean when I use a tub. Good night!" He stood for a moment in the door, smiling back at her. "You'll be in bed when I get back."

He took his time about unhooking the roller towel and finding the soap on the back piazza, and walked leisurely to the front gate, whistling. Once out of the gate he struck into a dead run down the public road. If he had

been too deaf to hear Anson's good night, he was neither deaf nor blind now. He stepped behind a bush in the fence corner, when he saw a horseman galloping towards him; and, again, when a man stepped out from a side road, David as quickly moved into the woods.

"Who's that?" the man demanded, for, being Mrs. Whittemore's overseer he also had quick eyes, trained to see possible runaways. "If you don't stop, I'll shoot."

Shoot he did, though he might as well have been shooting at the moonbeams, for David was a hundred yards behind his back and running swiftly down the sandy road. Half a mile from the store he jumped the fence and cut across Peter Marschalk's corn field. As he approached the house, a hound ran out barking. The boy snapped his fingers and the dog began to fawn. Anno Domini was still up. He heard the whir of her spinning wheel, but he passed the door and, going around the house, stopped under an open window. He sprang up, clutched the window-sill and drew his head above the ledge; it was strange how sure he was of this woman. All his life he had been taught to beware of her tongue, yet to-night he had picked her out of all others as the one to be trusted.

As though impelled by the earnestness of his gaze Anno Domini looked up and met his eyes. She started and her mouth opened. Then her teeth came together with a click. David nodded, and with an unconscious sigh he dropped down to the ground.

Anno met him at the corner of the house.

"Honey, is yo' mammy — ?" she began.

"No, mother is all right. It's Mr. and Mrs. Herrick — and — and Annie Laurie." The idea of the little girl in the hands of Renier choked him.

"All sick? They hain't got yaller fever, Davie?"

The boy shook his head. He was making directly for the horse-lot, Anno Domini following him.

"Renier is fixing to tar and feather them."

The woman was rooted to the spot and speechless.

"They're nigger-stealers and helped Renier's boy

Jeffrey to run away. Renier tortured him and he told on the Herricks."

David opened the lot gate and Anno followed him through.

"But, honey, nobody b'lieves a nigger. They can't tar an' feather folks on what a nigger says; they'll have t' git mo' proof." Anno had halted again.

Then the whole story came out. David told her all that he had seen and heard in the cave.

"Ye never told the colonel, Davie?"

"I went to tell him but he was gone. I ought to have told Mrs. Greenwood. She would have sent for the colonel and maybe she would have sent the Herricks off. It's all my fault —" He struck his hands together sharply. "If harm comes to Annie Laurie, it's all my fault."

"But thar won't no harm come to her, honey." Anno opened the stable door and led out the old grey mare. "Ye jest throw the saddle on this filly an' gallop over thar an' make 'em hide afo' Renier an' his gang gits thar — or ye mought take the wagon an' bring 'em back here. I reckon Louis Renier'll know better'n to stick his nose —"

"Oh, hell!" David cried; and not until two weeks later did he remember that he had done that which he heard the colonel declare no gentleman would do, — swear in the presence of a petticoat. "That gang is not afraid of the devil; they'll go anywhere. Besides, the law is on their side. After they tar and feather them, they are going to turn them over to the sheriff. I met him riding up the road. Two of his negroes have run away. If we don't get Mr. Herrick out of the county to-night, he'll never leave it alive."

He had led the horse to the shed and backed it between the shafts of the little spring wagon. Now he began to buckle the straps of the harness. He could feel his heart beat to his finger ends.

"Air ye goin' to drive 'em across the river, honey?" Anno was fastening the straps on her side of the horse.

"No, I'm going to the cave to warn Mr. Herrick.

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You'll have to drive Mrs. Herrick and Annie Laurie up to Belair to catch the twelve o'clock passenger. You must do it!"

For the first time in Anno Domini's life she was taking orders, and from a boy! She was too intent on the task laid before her to think of the novelty of the situation or to wonder at his power. She glanced up at the stars.

"It's mighty nigh ten o'clock," she replied.

"It's only fifteen miles. This horse has been on the track; she's old, but she knows how to move."

David strung the lines through the rings on the saddle and was buckling them on the bit.

"How far will Mrs. Herrick have to go, Davie? How far will she have to go afo' it is safe fer her to stop? You know she ain't the sort of female critter that kin hoe her own row; she jest nat'rally does what folks tell 'er." David had turned the horse's head and Anno was climbing in the wagon. "Do you think she mought git off the steam cyars at Brazelia?"

"You mustn't let her stop in Georgia." The boy was so positive that his voice sounded almost fierce. "When the sheriff sees that cave and can't find Mr. Herrick, he'll get the dogs. When the dogs can't find him, he'll be telegraphing to every place they can think of. Tell Mrs. Herrick that she mustn't stop until she gets to the place where they stopped when they were run out of Tennessee. Tell her that Mr. Herrick will expect to meet her there. She knows the place; it's in Philadelphia."

"Philadelphy!" Anno Domini exclaimed. "That's a fur ways. Do ye reckon she's got money to git thar?"

"No, they never do have money. Mr. Herrick gives it to the negroes he sends off. You'll have to give her this." David drew a small bag from the bosom of his shirt and thrust it into her hands. "It's enough to take her there, I reckon."

Anno Domini felt the weight of the little bag. There was a note of horror in her voice when she exclaimed:

"Oh, Davie, honey, ye didn't take it from —"

"No! It's all mine. I've been saving it to go to school."

"Oh, Davie — !" The note in her voice had changed.

"It don't matter; I can make more. You haven't any time to lose. Are you going without your bonnet?"

The woman clapped her hands to her head, then took up the reins resolutely. Mrs. Peter Marschalk was herself again.

"July air won't hurt me none, I reckon. I'll need all the time I've got t' make that female critter git in this waggin. I ain't a-goin' to waste no time a-talkin'. I'll hustle her bag an' baggage in this waggin. When I've got this filly a-stirrin' of her stumps up that Milledgeville Road, I'll have time to explain. Good-by, Davie, — you kin depen' on me — I'll do what I've set out fer." She lopped the old mare on the back with the reins and turned her head towards the gate.

"Tell Mrs. Herrick that Mr. Herrick will go down the river — and tell — tell Annie Laurie — good-by!" David called softly after her: "Tell her when I get to be a man I'll find her."

Anno glanced back over her shoulder and nodded her head. As she drove by the corner of the house, she called to her son:

"Bubber, ef anybody comes an' axes fer me, tell 'em I've drove over to Greenwood Hall with that thar cloth I've been a-weavin' — "

"Yes, m'um," Bubber's voice growled.

"Tell 'em I left at seven o'clock layin' ter git back by nine."

"Yes, m'um," came again from Bubber.

"That's one good pint about the Dutch," she murmured. "They never ax no questions an' they never use their eyes. Git up thar, Hecate! You've got t' cut dirt to-night, so you mought as well begin about it. Git up thar!" She drew the reins over the old mare's back, and it sped up the public road towards Augusta as though it were racing on a hard beaten track instead of through sand a foot deep.

David was moving through the moon-lit cotton-fields

of the Greenwood plantation at a gait that he had practiced with Twiggs and Jack on their hunting and fishing trips, during those wonderful days when the three were at school together. It was about one third walk and two-thirds run, but they called it an Indian trot.

CHAPTER X

DAVID SETS OUT TO FIND ALEC STEPHENS

IN September, before the colonel returned, David, getting back from town later than usual one afternoon, found the front piazza of the store deserted and the door closed. As he stopped the mules in the back yard, Mrs. Peter Marschalk came out on the porch.

"Is anything the matter? Is mother sick?" he asked, as he sprang from the wagon. Nancy had been ailing for the last several weeks, and the unusual stillness about the place suggested illness and made him think at once of her.

"Yes, honey," Anno Domini answered, and in spite of her effort her voice trembled. "She ain't as well as she was this mornin'."

David stopped with his hand on the double-tree, in the act of unhitching the trace-chains.

"What is the matter? Is she much sick?" He had turned from the wagon and was mounting the steps.

"Yes, honey, she's been mighty bad off. Now —"

The boy, staring at her, caught the sparkle of tears in her eyes. As he turned towards the door, she put her hand on his arm.

"Oh, Davie," she cried. "Oh, Davie, yo' mammy's dead — yo' mammy's dead."

Without a word he brushed aside her sympathizing hand and passed on into his mother's room. It was there! He knew what to expect. The white sheet over the still form on the bed, the very same bed on which his father had been placed. Perhaps it was the same sheet. It struck him as strange that he should think of such trivial things now.

He turned down the sheet. How peaceful and smiling

her face was! She looked as though she had just fallen to sleep. She was paler than he had ever seen her and her eyes were not quite so tightly closed. Ah, those deep tender eyes! They would never brighten again at his coming. He would never feel the soft pressure of her arms about his neck as he gave her his good-night kiss. There would be no more good-night kisses for him. His father had said she was his best friend, and she was gone, gone forever beyond his reach.

Like one in a trance he stood gazing down at the still, smiling face. He recalled the time he had stood by his father. Then his mother was with him, her hand clasped closely in his. Now his hand was empty and he stood alone.

The blubbering sobs of a man came to him from the next room. He recognized Louis Renier's voice; then the store-keeper spoke:

"Hit seems like I never do have nothin' but bad luck. Sometimes I 'most think the Lord's got a spite agin me. I was jes' a-gittin' on my feet, so t' speak, when my fust wife died. An' now, jes' about the time I was a-straightenin' out an' beginnin' to see my way clear t' lay by a few dollars, he takes Nannie off. I 'most b'lieve he ain't a-goin' t' let me prosper nohow."

The boy felt a wild desire to scream, to do anything to shut out from his ears the man's shallow grief. He turned to flee, but on the threshold turned back. Lifting the sheet again, he stood for a moment gazing on the still, peaceful face. Stooping, he kissed her, then he fled from the room, up the creaking ladder to his little corner in the garret. Here he flung himself down on the bed in an agony of grief.

At last the violence spent itself and he began to grow more calm. Turning his face on the pillow, he saw a star just twinkling forth from the twilight. He recalled how, the night after his father's death, he had seen that star for the first time and gradually come to believe it was his father looking down, watching him; how, in the first days of their grief, he and his mother had talked of the fancy and the comfort it had given them. A lump rose

in his throat and his eyes filled. Then, through his tears, he saw a second star, shining steady and true by the side of the first. They were together, his father's and his mother's stars. He heaved a deep unconscious sigh, and the bitterness of his grief seemed lifted from his heart.

As he lay staring through the window at the stars he began to whisper, like a child, to tell them of his plans.

"I've kept my promise to you, at least as far as I could. I stood by mammy." Unconsciously the old name dropped from his tongue though he had not used it for years. "I wouldn't go when Decatur wanted to take me and pay my way through school. I wasn't sure Hans wouldn't mistreat her, so I stayed. She wasn't happy like she use' to be, but — but I tried to — "

Here his voice broke and he wiped the tears from his eyes with the corner of the sheet.

"If Hans wants me, I'll stay and work and behave myself just like you were here. When Decatur gets back, if he hasn't changed his mind, I'll take his offer and do what he wants me to. If he don't want me, there's Alec Stephens. You said he'd keep his promise to give me a chance. I will work and pay him back. I'll do the best I can to get an education just as — "

There was a commotion down stairs, the sound of heavy feet tramping up the front steps. David sprang to his feet in an agony of terror. Suppose they were taking her out! He had promised to stay by her to the last. He drew his shirt sleeve across his eyes and stumbled towards the ladder. As he went down, he heard his step-father talking to some one on the front piazza.

"Yes, the sto' will be closed to-morrow, but it'll be open the nex' day," he was saying. "The buryin' will be at nine o'clock in the mornin'. Well, it is kinder early, but it's crappin' time. Nobody ain't a-hankerin' to take their mules out the plow an' it do 'pear to me that it ain't neighborly not to consider the season o'the year in yo' afflictions."

There was a loud blowing of the nose; then the storekeeper's voice went on.

" After the buryin' I'll take the boy t' town. I might as well, ye know, seein' I couldn't put the mules back in the field that day. I'll take the boy t' Augusty an' get the ordinary to draw up papers fer 'im. The sheriff stopped by here a while ago an' told me he'd heard some talk o' Decatur Fulton wantin' t' educate 'im for his father's sake. I ain't a-goin' t' be cheated out my rights like that. I took care of 'im, raised 'im from a helpless infant, as you might say, an' now, jest when he's beginnin' to be a little useful, they want t' git 'im away."

David's head swam and the blood seemed beating against his temples with the force of a triphammer. As he entered the little dining room behind the store, the candle on the mantelpiece was like a blurred moon.

" I'm glad you've come back, Davie." It was Anno Domini's voice, and she was seated before the empty fireplace with a pile of clothes on the chair at her side and a small bundle in her lap.

There were tears on her gaunt cheeks and the boy knew that she had been crying over her work. A sudden feeling of awe struck him, clearing the mist from his eyes, and he pointed to the bundle on her knees.

" What is that? " he demanded.

" Oh, Davie, didn't you know? " She lifted the towel from the dead baby. " It's yo' little sister, honey."

" Is she dead too? "

" Yes, honey." Anno's tears were flowing afresh. " She never lived mo'n a half hour, opened her eyes an' give two saft little cries, jest like she was askin' fer 'er mammy. When she didn't git no answer, she jest shet er' eyes an' died. She's a mighty pretty little gal, Davie, the very spit o' Nannie when I fust seed 'er. Won't ye look at 'er, honey? "

The boy stared down at the little figure. Was it possible that a half hour of this world could stamp so much trouble, such deep lines of care, on the tiny face! He touched one of the cold hands, uncurled the waxen fingers. He had always longed for a little sister. If she could only have lived!

His foot was on the first round of the ladder when Hans' voice stopped him.

"Well, I don't say I ain't never a-goin' t' let 'em have 'im. Thar's injucements, ye know. Ef they've a mind to give them injucements — " Here he chuckled. "I ain't a-sayin' I won't take 'em But I'm a-goin' t' sign those papers befo' the ordinary to-morrow. I ain't to be cheated out my rights even if I is a po' man. Ef they set so much sto' by his daddy an' givin' 'im an edecation, they'll have to pay my price fer his services, I reckon."

"They had to pay my price for that nigger boy, five thousand dollars," Renier answered encouragingly.

"Ef they'll pay five thousan' fer a nigger, it seem like they might be willin' to pay ten for a white boy an' considerin' his daddy; shucks, he war'nt no sort of a man nohow! I heard, the time he got killed, that he an' his daddy an' his gran'daddy, the whole race of 'em, jest made niggers of theyselves for the Twiggses. Folks told me that Jim Hamilton had been fixin' the colonel's gin ever since he started the business, an' never got a cent. Every year the colonel would say, ' take what you please, James,' an' that would be the end of it. Ef they think I'm the same sort they'll find out different, I reckon. They'll pay my price fer that boy or not git 'im."

"You'd better keep your eyes on him," suggested Renier. "He ain't overly proud of bein' your step-son. If he should take it into his head to make off — "

David heard him snap his fingers.

"The papers the ordinary gits out will protect me, I reckon," Hans replied.

"If the boy goes over t' Greenwood Hall or to Good Hope, do you think Charles or Shadrach will give him up to you?" Renier laughed contemptuously. "They'll see you in hell first. They know how the colonel and ol' lady Greenwood feel towards you and me. You'll never get a chance t' take him to the ordinary."

"But he hain't got no cause to run away," King per-

sisted. "He don't know what I aim t' do. I hain't told 'im."

"You told Jabez, standin' right here on these front steps. I met 'im down the road and he said you did. What was to keep Anson and Violet from hearin' you? As sure as I've got two feet, they'll warn that boy t'-night." Here Renier laughed again. "David's young but he's no fool. He'll know what t' do."

There was a moment's silence, then the store-keeper asked:

"Must I keep 'im locked up t'-night?"

"He's easier kept than caught," was Renier's laconic reply.

"He's in the loft now. Been thar ever sence he looked at his mammy. Anno Domini wouldn't let me call 'im t' unhitch the mules."

"That's a good place for him t' stay. Ten thousand dollars is a mighty big pile of money and you don't want t' take no risk on losing it."

David heard the front legs of a chair strike the floor of the piazza, and knew that Hans King had taken his feet down from the railing. He started towards the back door. Then he turned back; they would see him if he tried to open the door. For an instant he stared about, looking for a place of concealment. Then he stepped into the front room where the still figure lay stretched on the bed.

"You hain't seed nothin' o' Davie, has ye, Miss Marschalk?" Hans asked, stopping in the door of the back room.

"Not sence he went up that ladder," Anno replied and she thought she was speaking the truth.

"I thought I'd jest step up the ladder an' see what he's about. He hain't had no dinner, ye know." He was still standing in the door.

"Hump!" grunted Anno, and she squared herself further around in her chair and went on dressing the baby. Long ago Mrs. Peter Marschalk had remarked to her husband: "The idee o' Nannie marryin' that critter! Every time I ketch sight of 'im I have t' turn

my thumbs under my fingers an' hold 'em thar to keep 'em from gougin' his eyes out." Now, as he spoke to her the third time, she turned her thumbs into the palms of her hands and held them firmly.

"Don't ye think he ought t' git his dinner afo' the folks begin t' come t' set up?" King asked.

She turned on him fiercely, her hands under her apron.

"Why can't ye let the boy be?" she demanded. "He loved his mammy. He ain't like you; his heart ain't in his stummick."

David heard him climb the rickety ladder and then call to him. He knew that his head was above the ceiling and that it was time for him to go. He stepped out the room and, slipping swiftly down the narrow passage, opened the back door.

"There he goes!" shouted Renier, coming to the front door just as David went out the back. "There goes the little devil, Hans. There he goes, running away!"

As David sprang over the lot fence, he heard them come out on the back porch and run down the steps. The moon was up and Renier caught sight of him as he sped through the cotton field.

"There he goes! Through the cotton! By God, how the little devil can run!"

They were climbing the lot fence, when David looked back from the top of the fence that separated the field from the woods.

"Come back, Davie," Hans shouted, motioning to him. "Come back, son. I ain't a-goin' to hurt ye."

"I reckon you won't," the boy jeered. "Because you can't get me."

He dropped down and disappeared in the woods.

"Just what I told you," Renier said. "He's making straight for the colonel's."

He was mistaken. Once in the woods the boy almost doubled in his tracks. Skirting along the fence, he returned to the public road and turned towards Augusta.

"I'm not going to ask Decatur to pay money to a lawyer," he murmured to himself, as he strode swiftly

along. "Besides, I am not sure he'd be willing. The colonel has lent me books and been mighty kind to me, but he never said nothing about giving me an education. No, I'll go to Alec Stephens. If Hans takes me to court, there'll be no lawyer to pay. I've got no clothes and I haven't had my dinner but — " He tapped his belt significantly. "I've got nearly two dollars; that'll keep me from starving and I know how to walk, I reckon."

As he passed the gate of the Baldee lane, he glanced up at the deserted house.

"I'm glad you are gone, now, Annie Laurie. It makes it easier for me. I can find you as quick in Philadelphia as in Georgia, I reckon."

It was nearly midnight when he turned into the Milledgeville Road. A mile further up, he took the neighborhood road, passed through Kissing Bower, and, striking the Georgia Railroad at Phinizy's crossing, set out for Crawfordville, to find Liberty Hall, the home of Alec Stephens.

BOOK TWO

THE FUSING OF THE UNION

CHAPTER I

DAVID BECOMES A PAGE IN CONGRESS

WHEN David Hamilton first went to Washington as page for Alexander H. Stephens, Congressman from Georgia, the House of Representatives held its sessions in that stately room which we know to-day as Statuary Hall. It is the most interesting spot, historically, in the great capitol. There Randolph, Webster, Clay, Calhoun and many others, whose names are now household words with the children of our country, won their spurs as statesmen and made the walls ring with their eloquence. There questions that threatened the very life of the Union were fiercely wrangled over. Many turbulent scenes took place, displays of bitter party and sectional feeling. There on the floor, near where David first took his stand, only the year before had sat a venerable ex-President, still serving his beloved country, when touched by the finger of God.

Instead of the groups of statues which we see looking so pallid and ghostly in the dim light David saw living men, — the men who tore asunder bonds which their fathers had devoted their lives to knit, the men by the fire of whose eloquence the Union was fused!

The Thirty-first Congress opened the third day of December, 1849, with a battle royal. For the second time in our history, the national skeleton, slavery, threatened to break from its confines. It had given the

framers of the Constitution no little trouble, but, believing its end near, they limited its domain and left it to die. Instead of dying, it grew strong and multiplied fourfold. Sixty-seven years after its imprisonment, it made its first outbreak. It threatened to overrun the entire Louisiana territory and was prevented only by the Missouri Compromise. Now, again, the monster, stronger than ever, was fiercely chafing against restraint and demanding admission into that broad tract of country gained by our war with Mexico.

The Wilmot proviso, which sought to check it, was received as a fire-brand. It raised to fever heat public feeling in both sections. Say what we may, in 1849 the union of states had ceased to exist; it had become a union of two sections. The cotton states denounced the proviso as the sum of all villainies. The sovereign people of Virginia, met in convention, declared against it; Tennessee asserted that forbearance had ceased to be a virtue; Kentucky, one section at least, demanded the greatest of her sons to resign his seat in the senate because he had written a letter advocating gradual emancipation; while the free states ordered their senators and representatives not only to support the proviso to the bitter end but to use their utmost influence to abolish slavery and the slave-trade in the District of Columbia. So the battle raged.

It was a memorable session in both Houses. The balloting for Speaker lasted nearly three weeks. Congressmen, for once, in obeying instructions from their constituents, abused each other to their hearts' content. It was Whig against Democrat, while the handful of Free Soilers, denouncing both, refused to help either. Why should they? Had not their old allies betrayed them, sounding their own death knell by electing a slave-owning President? The leader of the stubborn little band was from the famous Western Reserve, that little corner in our country, which not only persisted in treating negroes as human beings but whose men declared their daughters were the equals of their sons and that they should be educated together. It is small

wonder they were considered, and sometimes called, worse than lunatics by their brothers from the South.

After sixty-three ballots the mace was placed on its pedestal and Howell Cobb, the owner of a thousand slaves, sat in the Speaker's chair. Then Zachary Taylor sent in the only message which, in the wisdom of God, he was to present as President of the United States. In it he recommended that California, whose recently discovered gold mines rendered it the most desirable portion of the new territory, be admitted as a free state. Slavery reared its head and the battle was on again.

The great intellectual contest was to take place in the senate. There Webster, Clay, and Calhoun appeared together for the last time. When the excitement was at its height and the friends of the Union were in despair for their cause, Henry Clay, the best loved man in the country, rose in his seat and offered his third historic Compromise.

All this passed before David's eyes, and he watched and listened as only a boy trained by necessity to thought and self-reliance can. He had forgotten neither the words of the general nor the heart-rending scenes he had witnessed at the great auction in Savannah, but love and pride for his native state were throbbing in his veins and he espoused her cause with all the ardor of his sincere young heart.

The night after Clay's speech in favor of his compromise, Mr. Stephens asked David:

"What did you think of the Mill-boy of the Slashes, my boy?"

David looked at him thoughtfully for a moment before he answered.

"He was about the sickest looking man I ever saw when he first came in, but when he got to speaking —" a sparkle of amusement came into his eyes and he glanced up slyly at his friend — "why, he made me so sure slavery is right, that I almost wished my skin would turn black. He's almost as good a talker as you are."

"Then you don't believe slavery is right?" Mr.

Stephens asked, smiling at the sincerity of his compliment.

"When I hear you and Mr. Clay talk, I do, but when I think of that auction in Savannah and of Louis Renier, I don't," he answered gravely. He had felt no shyness when he first trudged up the steps of the Court House in Augusta and shook hands with Mr. Stephens. He was just as free from it now. The statesman possessed the God-given quality of sincere simplicity which inspires love and respect without fear.

"Then you think the South in the wrong?" Mr. Stephens' voice was very quiet.

The boy's face flushed and tears sprang into his eyes.

"No," he answered passionately. "We had the slaves when we came into the Union. They had been honestly bought and paid for. The North has no more right to set them free than they have to take our horses. We have as good right to new territory as they have. We did our share of the fighting; we should have our share of the spoils. Besides" — here he straightened up proudly, — "besides, Georgia is my state; I'll fight for her."

"That is the way I feel," Mr. Stephens said. "Before many years, I fear, we shall have to fight. You will, not I. That is one of the compensations of my ill health; I shall not live to see the Union shattered!"

A few days after this conversation, David ran over from the Capitol to Mrs. Carter's boarding-house, number two North A Street, for a bundle of papers which Mr. Stephens had forgotten. As he bounded up the stairs a slender little girl, who was toiling up the first flight with a large basket, stopped at the first landing and stood aside for him to pass. There was barely a half-light and David, fresh from the glare of the sun on the snow, could see only that she was a white girl and that the basket was too heavy for her strength.

"I'll take it up for you," he said cheerily, and, without more ado, he slipped the basket from her arm and started up the steps. Near the top he asked: "Where are you taking it?"

"To Mr. Stephens' room," she replied.

David glanced back over his shoulder, smiling.

"Then some of them must be my clothes," he said.

"Are you his son?" the little girl asked.

Here David laughed merrily.

"No, only his page," he answered; and he turned up the hall and pushed open the door of Mr. Stephens' bedroom.

Then he put the basket on the bed and turned to go out. The girl was coming in the door.

"Annie Laurie!" he cried. "Annie Laurie!" And he swept her in with his long arms and kissed her.

The next instant he was standing sheepishly before her, while she was wiping the kiss from her hot cheek with the hem of her calico dress.

"You've cut off your hair," he said gruffly, and he brushed the moisture from his eyes with the sleeve of his jacket.

"I sold it, Davie," Annie Laurie answered.

"Sold it!" he exclaimed. Then he glanced at her faded cotton dress, her worn shoes and the basket of clothes on the bed. "What does it mean? What has happened? Where is your father?"

The tears were running over her cheeks so fast that she could not brush them away. David led her to Mr. Stephens' easy chair, and, taking his seat on the corner of the wood-box, tried to comfort her by patting her hand.

"Is he —" He stopped to use the sleeve of his jacket on his eyes again. "— dead?"

Annie Laurie shook her head. "No, but — he was dreadfully sick — we thought he would die. They had to cut his arm off."

"Cut his arm off!" Then he recalled the reason for Herrick's leaving Georgia and the scene in Yaller Ned's cave. The passionate denunciations of the Southern congressmen against the evil work of the abolitionists were fresh in his mind. He asked soberly: "Has he been stealing slaves again?"

"Yes, and they shot him. The doctor had to cut his arm off."

There was a long pause. Annie Laurie was wiping away her tears and David's eyes were fastened on her slender white hands. The taper fingers were roughened and the nails were worn to the quick.

" Your mother takes in washing, and you help her? " he asked.

The little girl nodded.

" It was all we could get. Mamma came to see Mrs. Carter and she spoke to Mr. Stephens for her. We have the wash of four other gentlemen, six with yours, David," she added, and the ghost of a smile rippled over her face. " Won't mamma be surprised, when I tell her that the young gentleman who wears such fine clothes is you! "

" And to think that you have been coming here twice a week for three months and me not to find it out! " David smiled back at her. " Didn't your mother know that Mr. Stephens had no son? Didn't he ever mention my name? "

" Oh, she has never seen Mr. Stephens. Neither have I. Mamma spoke — "

" Never have seen Mr. Stephens! Oh, you must see him; he is a wonderful man. You must come to hear him speak. If you only see him without hearing him speak — " David hesitated. " Well, I suppose he is not much to look at. When I first saw him I thought he was a sick boy." He laughed at the recollection. " Mr. Stephens says that when I shook hands with him after his speech, I said: ' I hope you're feeling better this mornin'.' Now I think he is beautiful." Here David glanced up at Annie Laurie, his eyes beaming with enthusiasm. " I have heard Toombs and all the other handsome, fine-looking men in the House, but " — he shook his head, " — none of them come up to Mr. Stephens. You must let me take you to hear him the next time he speaks."

" Oh, I should like so much to go, David," she cried, her eyes sparkling; then her face became serious. " We never have time. Mamma said — " she smiled roguishly. " David, you wear such big holes in your socks."

The boy laughed heartily. For the first time she

seemed the Annie Laurie of old. He even forgot that her curls were gone.

"Never mind, I won't do it any more, I'll cut off my toes first. It's because I've been taking such long walks with Twiggs and Jack."

"Twiggs and Jack!" she exclaimed. "Have they been in Washington?"

"Been here! They are here. We go to school together. We go to the preparatory school of the Columbian College."

"I thought you said you were Mr. Stephens' page." Annie Laurie was puzzled.

"I am; at least, I draw the pay. Mr. Stephens says he has three pages. You see Jack and Twiggs help me out. We are not in the same classes." His face clouded for an instant. "I'm a year behind."

Annie Laurie was quick to detect the note of mortification in his voice.

"But you can catch up," she said positively. "Papa says you are just as smart as Twiggs, and you study harder. You can catch up."

David chuckled, delighted at the eagerness with which she championed his cause.

"I am catching up. I study every night and will next summer. Mrs. Beverly says if —"

"Mrs. Beverly!"

David nodded. Then he caught her hand and squeezed it.

"And Margaret too! Mrs. Beverly has taken a house facing the square. Twiggs had entered the Virginia Military Academy at Lexington. You know how crazy he always was about being a soldier, and he was perfectly wild about the professor of military tactics there, Major T. J. Jackson. He didn't want to leave a bit. But when Mr. Clinton was elected senator, Mrs. Beverly decided to come here to live, so Margaret and Twiggs could be with Jack. They will all be so glad to see you, Annie Laurie. Mrs. Beverly will help your mother; she always knows just what to do. Where do you live?"

The little girl sprang up.

"Oh, David, I promised mamma to hurry back!" she exclaimed. "I have another wash to deliver, and it's nearly dark now."

David was on his feet and stood looking down at her uneasily.

"You can't go by yourself," he said authoritively. "You will have to wait and let me take you."

"But you, — you said you came for papers."

David collapsed. For the first time in his life he had neglected a duty; and he knew the papers were important.

"I did," he whispered; "he told me to hurry and I — forgot."

"Then hurry, and come on!"

It was Annie Laurie of Tupelo Academy. She caught him by the lapel of his jacket and swept him out of the room before her.

"You must leave the basket," he pleaded. "I'll bring it. To-morrow is Sunday; I bring it to you to-morrow."

Annie Laurie only laughed and shook her head.

"You can't, I've got to have it to take the other clothes in."

As they went down the front steps a hackney-coach was passing, and David hailed it. The little girl remonstrated and flatly refused to get in. David had a will of his own. He couldn't go home with her, but, whatever happened, she should not walk through the snowy streets so long as he had a dollar in his pocket. So Annie Laurie had her first ride since coming to Washington, while David trudged whistling back to the Capitol, his hands in his pockets and the papers tucked under his arm.

CHAPTER II

MR. HERRICK

IT is well known that when the National capital was about to be laid out there were two large lot-buyers, living two miles apart, each determined to have the public buildings upon the centre of his own property. Like children quarrelling over a sugar horse they pulled the subject in two, and one got the head and the other the tail.

The capitol stands on a rising ground in solitary grandeur, and the President's house and the department buildings are a mile away on another gentle hillock. The first morning that David walked from Mrs. Carter's boarding-house on Capitol Hill to see the Herricks, the city straddled and stretched between the head and the tail of the sugar horse, doing its best to look compact and continuous. Pennsylvania Avenue was unpaved, and looked much like a country road of to-day. Once past the State and War buildings, the city's effort to appear continuous stopped with the smooth road. That quarter looked like a waste plain, upon which it had rained naked brick houses and where each man had cut a road with reference to his own front door. These were the homes of some of the fashionable people and lacked nothing of the real country but trees, gardens and fences.

When David reached Lafayette Square there was a throng of people. The day being Sunday and the sun shining, they were all on their way to old St. John, the President's church it was then called, because it had been built in the days of Jefferson, and every occupant of the White House since had gone there to worship.

The Herricks lived in a little house of five rooms

clustered about one chimney. It stood on L Street quite near the little park which is now called Washington Circle. Annie Laurie met David at the door and Mrs. Herrick was not far behind her. Tears were in her eyes, and, when the boy held his face to be kissed just as he used to do in Georgia, she had to take a corner of her apron to wipe them off her cheeks.

"You haven't changed a bit, David, except to grow a little taller," she said.

It did the boy's heart good to hear Annie Laurie laugh and to see her beautiful little head, with its thatch of soft golden curls, without a hat.

"When I first told mamma about meeting you, David," the little girl said, "she was delighted and said she hoped you would come to-day. But when I told her that you were Mr. Stephens' page in Congress, and had sent me home in a carriage — " here Annie Laurie laughed again, — "I believe she almost hoped you wouldn't come."

"No, I wanted to see you very much, David," Mrs. Herrick replied. "I can never thank you enough, none of us can, for warning us — for running such risks to get us away from Georgia, and for the money you sent by Mrs. Marschalk. When we reached Philadelphia I wanted to write and thank you and assure you that we would pay it back, but — " she shook her head and glanced towards the next room, — "he said the letter might be opened in the mails and get you and Mrs. Marschalk into trouble; and now I don't know when we shall be able to pay you back. We — "

"You have paid me back already, Mrs. Herrick," David interrupted, smiling. "You have paid me many times over by your kindness to me, when I was a child."

"Mamma," Annie Laurie called gaily from the next room, "papa is getting jealous. He wants a part of David's visit for himself. Come in here, David."

Glad to be called, David went. Prepared as he had been by the little girl's tears when speaking of her father, he was shocked when he saw his old teacher. Mr.

Herrick was seated, propped up in an old rocking chair, before the fire. His face was unshaven, and he looked haggard and old from suffering. He was scarcely a shadow of the vigorous, gentlemanly-looking man the boy had known.

"You see they winged me this time, David," he said, as the boy greeted him. "They have fixed me so that I can't do their institution very much more harm, even if I ever get on my feet again."

"I'm very sorry you have been so ill, Mr. Herrick. But the worst is passed. You are getting well now and I hope you will soon be out again," David replied, with a cheerfulness he was far from feeling.

The sick man shook his head sadly.

"When you have had your arm amputated three times, you don't have much hope of getting out soon, my boy."

"Three times!" David was not prepared for that.

"Yes, I was shot just above the wrist. Here's where three amputations carried it." Mr. Herrick touched the end of the stub just below the shoulder. "I had to hide in the mountains so long that gangrene set in before I could get a doctor. You see, soon after reaching Philadelphia I was sent by the society to Tennessee, not the place where we were before coming to Georgia, but in the eastern part, up in the mountains. It was a little inn which they had been using for several years as a station of the underground railroad, passing slaves from the western part of the Carolinas and Virginia on to Ohio. I can tell you all this," he added, with a faint smile, "because the night they ran my wife and Annie Laurie out they burned every building, fence and tree on the place. Of course, the society has changed the route. We were there only two months, but we did a wonderful business, not with the inn, for that was a little out of the way place and now that railroads are being built in that section few people travel that way through the mountains, but there wasn't a night that one or more passengers on the underground didn't drop in."

"Was it while you were passing them over into Ohio

that you were shot?" the boy asked. He remembered the stories he had listened to in Yaller Ned's cave and he wanted to hear the end.

"No," Mr. Herrick replied, shaking his head. "A cattleman from South Carolina recognized one of our conductors who had laid over for a rest. They had been losing a great many slaves in that section of Carolina and it seems that the people had become suspicious of the conductor, though he didn't know it. The cattleman evidently didn't believe the explanation he gave for being so far away from home, for he went off and held a consultation with some of his friends. The next day he returned with six other men and, as luck would have it, among them was a man who had known me in the southwestern part of the state. I didn't recognize the fellow, however, and he said nothing. You see they had come prepared for anything. When the cattleman asked for the man from Carolina and found he had gone, he was for following him, but the fellow from southwestern Tennessee said he was hungry, so they all came in and ordered dinner. While the dinner was cooking my wife went in the room where the men were sitting. She recognized our Tennessee neighbor at once, and came back and warned me. Then I realized that everything was not right and I made for the mountains."

The sick man moved restlessly and one of the pillows at his back slipped down. David sprang up to replace it, but he waved him off.

"Laurie!" he called, querulously, "Laurie!"

"Yes, father," the little girl answered, and the next instant she was running in from the kitchen, drying her hands on her apron. "Oh, has it fallen down again? What a naughty pillow! You may beat it for me, David, beat it hard." She slipped her arm around the invalid, eased his position, and replaced the pillow at his back. "There now," she said, laughing, as she smoothed back his hair and kissed him on the forehead. "Did I hurt your sore arm the least little bit?"

"No, you never do," Mr. Herrick answered, smiling more cheerfully. "She's a born nurse, David. When

he gets a little older, she can earn a good living in a ıospital."

"Thank you, sir," Annie Laurie replied, and she lropped him a little curtsy. It reminded David of the irst time he saw her, standing against the firelight in the ;abin and singing for her supper. "When I get bigger, . shall be a great singer like Jennie Lind. They say she nakes hundreds of dollars in one week. Then you shall ıave chicken every day instead of only on Sundays. Chicken is his Sunday treat, David, and I must go back ınd finish picking it for him."

"Oh, Annie Laurie!" David was on his feet.

She stopped in the door and waved him back, laughing nerrily.

"No, you are to entertain papa. He's sick of the ıight of mamma and me. But after dinner — after linner — David is to entertain us, and you are to take your nap and not hear a word of the fine things he tells ıs about." She tripped out and David saw her yellow ıead flash in the sunlight as she crossed the yard, running ɔack to the kitchen.

"She's a wonderful child, David," Mr. Herrick said, ıettling back among his pillows. "You must get her to tell you how she managed to take a negro girl and her ɔaby from the inn to the next station, when they were ıdvertised in every paper in the state and the notice of ;he reward nailed on our door."

"Annie Laurie piloted a negro across the mountains to the next station?" David grew hot, and he knit his ɔrows.

"A negro! Why, she conducted ten, counting that ɔaby. They were about the most difficult cases we had, but she took them safely through without any trouble."

"It's a wonder you were not afraid to let her do it, ıir." For the first time the boy resented his old teacher's engaging in such work.

"Oh, no, I realize her capacity. She is a remarkable child. She always has been. I am convinced that her parents were uncommonly smart people."

"Her parents!" David thought his ears had deceived him. "Why, isn't she yours and Mrs. Herrick's child?"

The sick man shook his head languidly.

"No, but she doesn't know it. She never will, if my wife has her way. That's one reason she would not stop with her people in North Carolina instead of going to Philadelphia. She was afraid they would tell Annie Laurie. She would be angry if she knew I had told you, so you mustn't let on that you know. She was furious with me the first time we came to your father's house for saying her name was Dorothy."

He stopped to pull up the blanket about his knees and David, after doing it for him, asked:

"Is her name Dorothy?"

"That is what her mother said she wanted her called."

"Dorothy what?"

"Ah, that is what nobody knows," Herrick answered. "And my wife never wants to find out." He paused, then presently continued: "It was the second year after our marriage and we were on a visit to her parents, — her father has an inn and a large farm in North Carolina. While we were there our only child was born and died. It lived less than a week. A few days after its death, Annie Laurie's mother was brought in from one of the stage-coaches. She was unconscious and could give no account of herself. That night this child was born, and the mother died."

He stopped abruptly and glanced towards the door.

"The wind has opened the back door," David said, rising. "I will go and shut it."

On his return he asked:

"Who shovelled the snow between the kitchen and the house?"

Mr. Herrick looked up inquiringly.

"Why, Laurie, I suppose," he answered, in the most matter-of-fact tone. "She does everything about the place. My wife is not very handy, you know, and I —"

David cut his explanation short.

"You never found out who her mother was?" he asked.

"No, and, as I was saying, she died the night Laurie was born. My wife's mother, thinking a sight of the child might rouse her, dressed it in clothes that had belonged to our baby and took it to her. It did arouse her for a moment. She smiled and when the old woman told her it was a girl, she said: 'Tell him that I said she must be named Dorothy.' She never said another word — I was in the room. She seemed to drop right back into a stupor and in less than an hour she was dead."

"But she had baggage; the stage driver must have known where she got in?"

"That was the most remarkable part of it," the teacher replied. "She was dressed like a lady — every garment she had on was the finest — but she didn't have a cent of money nor a piece of baggage, not even a hand-bag. She had been riding for two nights, when she arrived at my father-in-law's. The drivers had changed four times. I hunted up the first one, the man who had picked her up, and learned that he had found her standing by the roadside in the mountains near the Pennsylvania line. She stopped the stage and got in. The driver knew there were no houses for miles around the place, but she looked such a lady he never thought of questioning her."

Mr. Herrick paused. After waiting a little, David asked:

"Didn't she have anything to eat?"

"Oh, yes; at the first stop, after asking the inn-keeper some questions, she said that she had taken the wrong stage and that she wanted to go to the nearest railroad station. He bought her a stage ticket and gave her five dollars; she refused to take any more. She said that when she reached the railroad she would send an electric message to her family, — the innkeeper couldn't remember whether she said her husband or her mother. She left a fine cluster diamond ring with him as security for the money. He said she made him take it, but I noticed he wouldn't give it up at the same price."

"Did you try to buy it?" David questioned.

" I offered to return the money he had advanced, but he refused. He said he had as much right to it as I had, although I told him my wife had taken a fancy to the child and would care for it until it was claimed. Of course, nobody believed the child would ever be claimed. It was too evident that the woman had come off that way to keep from disgracing her family."

" What did she look like? " the boy asked, after a moment's silence.

" Like a fine lady, one of the most beautiful I ever saw. Annie Laurie grows more and more like her every day of her life. I hope she will be a better woman, though."

David flushed purple but he held his tongue. He got up out of his chair, and, as he was leaving the room, said:

" The storm blew down a tree in the yard. I think I'll go out and chop it up."

He was in his shirt-sleeves, making the ax ring, when Annie Laurie looked out the kitchen door.

" Why, it's David! " she exclaimed. Then she called: " David, it's wrong to work on Sunday. You'll be put in the moon."

The boy paid no attention to her. It was hard work, for the tree was dead and well dried, but the ax flashed steadily up and down and at each stroke wide white chips fell from the prostrate trunk.

He was stacking the last armful of wood just within the back door when Annie Laurie came in with the first dish for dinner. He slipped into his jacket and, running out to the kitchen, brought in the rest of the dinner before she returned.

It was a gay meal. For the first time since the Herricks had occupied the little house, its walls rang with laughter.

After Annie Laurie had cut up the sick man's food and placed things within his reach, she glanced up archly and asked:

" Did David tell you about all the fine speeches he has been hearing? "

"No," the boy answered promptly, "I did not tell him about hearing Mr. Clay."

"They say he is a fine speaker." Mr. Herrick's voice expressed no enthusiasm.

"One of the finest in the whole country," David replied. "Why, people came all the way from Boston and New York to hear him. The floors and galleries were so packed that you couldn't move. When you got in one place, you just had to stay there. Mr. Stephens says he is the best-beloved man in America."

"I dare say," Mr. Herrick replied. "People who travel the road half way between bad and good are usually followed by a crowd. Have you heard Mr. Webster?"

"Not yet. They say he will speak soon after Mr. Calhoun; Mr. Calhoun speaks to-morrow." Here David turned to Mrs. Herrick. "That's where I would like to take you and Annie Laurie, if you care to go."

"Oh, mamma, say yes, do say —" the little girl began eagerly.

Mrs. Herrick smiled sadly and shook her head.

"To-morrow is wash day, dearie," she said. "You know we mustn't put that off. Besides — " Here she glanced towards her husband, but before she could go on David interrupted.

"I know a woman who'll be glad to come," he hastened to say. "She's a good washer, and she'll bring her daughter to wait on Mr. Herrick. It will be in the morning; it won't take you all day."

"You had better go," Mr. Herrick said, speaking to his wife. "David has cut up that tree, so you won't need to buy wood this week. You can pay the woman to do the wash. Then the society may get in some funds. They send me money whenever they have it to spare," he added, turning to David. "I'll be glad to have them go. It will do my wife good and I should like to hear what that traitor Calhoun has to say now."

CHPATER III

A DYING GLADIATOR

YEARS have come and gone since that gray March day when David Hamilton conducted Mrs. Herrick and Annie Laurie through the halls of Congress. Our country has changed from a confederation of widely scattered states to a firmly knit commonwealth, from a Union, held together by the laws of an ill-understood constitution, to a Nation, one of the greatest of the world powers. As our country has changed, so also has its capital. From a sparsely settled district it has become a beautiful city, and, like the country whose national head it is, its growth is always westward towards the setting sun.

At the time of Annie Laurie's first visit the Capitol, instead of covering four acres as it does to-day, covered only an acre and a half. It was without the two great extensions which we know as the House and Senate wings and which contain, besides the new legislative halls, the luxurious marble rooms and the gorgeous room for the presidents. The dome was there, but it was much lower and built of wood.

The galleries of the House were deserted, and few members were on the floor when David led the way into the ladies' gallery that Mrs. Herrick and Annie Laurie might get a glimpse of the great hall before going into the Senate Chamber.

" See that man in the Speaker's chair? " he asked, pointing to the man who sat at the desk of the rostrum, behind which two crimson curtains hung in heavy folds from the capitals of the ponderous columns which supported the great arch of the hall.

" That's Howell Cobb, the man they had such a fight

to elect Speaker. They call him the Falstaff of the House. He's as jolly as he's fat. When he laughs Twiggs says his eyes look like the little end of nothing whittled down to a point."

"Who's the man talking?" Annie Laurie asked.

David shrugged his shoulders.

"That's Thaddeus Stephens; all the men in that corner are against slavery."

"Look, mamma, that is Thaddeus Stevens," Annie Laurie exclaimed, in an awed whisper. "Papa admires him very much, David. Who is that large man with black hair? He is writing — now he's looking up and tossing back his hair. Isn't he splendid looking, mamma? Is he an abolitionist, too, David?"

David chuckled and shook his head.

"Abolitionist! He'd sooner be called the devil. That's Bob Toombs of Georgia. You've heard Mr. Herrick speak of him, too, I reckon?"

The little girl's face wore an expression of horrified surprise and she leaned forward to get a better view of the Georgian.

"Why, David, he doesn't look so wicked?"

This time the boy's chuckle was glee.

"You tell Twiggs that Bob Toombs is wicked, and see what he says. He thinks him the greatest man in Washington."

"What do you think?" she asked.

David stepped forward to get a better view of the floor.

"Can you see that thin, little fellow beyond Toombs, — he's looking towards the Speaker. Now! did you see his face? Well, Horace Greeley says he's the most eloquent man in Washington, and I think he's the greatest."

"Oh, David, is that — ?" Annie Laurie hesitated.

"Yes, that is Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia," he replied, his face glowing with pride.

"The little sick-looking man, did you say that is Alec Stephens, David?" Mrs. Herrick asked. She had left her seat near the door and had come down and stood

near the children. " He doesn't look strong enough to make all those speeches that Mr. Herrick reads in the papers. He's been mighty sick, hasn't he? "

" I don't think he ever had a real well day in his life. He's the leader in his party, though. There's not a man in the House who has as much influence." David's face flushed and his eyes sparkled with pride and affection. " You should see them when the Speaker calls for them to pass between the tellers. Not a man on his side moves until Mr. Stephens gets up; then you should see them file down behind him. He's the head — "

There was a gust of wind produced by the sudden opening of the gallery door. David looked up.

There stood Master Twiggs Beverly, looking reproachfully down at him.

" I knew I'd find you gassing here," he said to David. " The people are packing in the Senate galleries like Smyrna figs. I had to get some fellows to come in and hold your seats for you. Howd'y do, Mrs. Herrick? I'm glad to see you. I hope Mr. Herrick is better this morning. Mamma sent her love to you. If you are to be at home this afternoon, she will call." Then he extended his hand to Annie Laurie. " Margaret wanted to come with me to look for you, but I couldn't scare up another fellow to keep her seat. She and Jack had to stay and look out for their own seats."

Then, like the young lord he was, he took the pick of the flock and walked off with the little girl, leaving David to follow with Mrs. Herrick. All the while Mrs. Herrick was wondering if he had ever heard of their hasty departure from Richmond County and expecting him to refer to it, but Annie Laurie, understanding as though by intuition the manners of his class, was confident that he knew the whole story and would never refer to it. Unlike David, he appeared not even to notice the loss of her hair. That, too, she put down to his credit.

At the door of the Senate gallery sat Mammy.

" Bress yo' soul, honey, but I is glad t' see you! Miss Margaret's been a-frettin' fer you ever sence Mahse David said you-all wus here. Good mornin', Miss Her-

rick. I hope you's well, ma'am. We-all was mighty sorry t' hear about Mr. Herrick's bein' so po'ly. I hope he's better dis mornin', ma'am. Miss sarnt you her com-pli-ments an' said ef you'd be at home this evenin' 'roun' t'ree or fo' o'clock she'd do herself the pleasure of callin' on you. No, honey, yo' Mammy ain't a-gwine in dat do'; it's bad enough t' hear niggers quarrel, 'thout listenin' to white gentlemens what ought t' know better."

They slipped into their seats in the front row of the gallery, as the four pages Twiggs had pressed into service slipped out. Margaret began to whisper to Annie Laurie but Jack motioned them to stop and to look at the floor.

There, entering the Senate chamber, was John C. Calhoun, the third of America's great triumvirate.

Annie Laurie saw a tall, slender old man with a ghastly face, his great sunken eyes glowing with fever, supported between two friends to his chair. A hush, like that which always comes in the presence of death, fell over the floor and the galleries. Mr. Dickinson paused in the midst of explaining his draft of a bill for the modification of the patent laws, the other members stopped their talking, reading or writing, while the ladies, both on the floor and in the gallery, put their handkerchiefs to their eyes.

The greatest of the advocates of secession was dying. The hand of death lay heavy on his shoulder. His body was sadly bent and his knitted brows and the deep lines, which care had chiseled into his fleshless face, told with impressive eloquence with what a heavy load he was stepping into his grave. Nobody could accuse him of ambition now. Dark clouds were hovering over his beloved South, threatening her cherished institution, slavery. His iron will bade death stay its hand till he had spoken his parting words in her defence, his parting warning.

For forty years he had served his country in Congress, in the Senate; he had been Secretary of War, Secretary of State and Vice-President. Surely, he had a right to demand that the country should listen.

Mr. Dickinson soon brought his explanation to an end.

Several petitions were quickly presented and as quickly referred. Then, on the motion of Mr. Butler of South Carolina, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of Mr. Clay's Compromise Resolutions.

Mr. Calhoun, still wearing his long circular cloak, rose in his seat. Stating briefly his inability to address the Senate in person, he expressed his thanks for the courtesy extended to him, and then, turning, asked his friend, Mr. James M. Mason, who stood at his side, to read his speech.

"I have, Senators, believed from the first that the agitation of the subject of slavery would, if not prevented by some timely and effective measure, end in disunion," Mr. Mason read, standing a little behind Mr. Calhoun, who sat with head erect, his eyes partly closed and his face immovable.

It was an extraordinary scene, with the impressive solemnity of a funeral, and the men and women on the floor and in the gallery listened with profound attention.

It was the old story of the national skeleton, beating against the walls of the prison pen in which the framers of the Constitution had confined it and demanding the right to go where it willed. It was the same cry of wolf — "Give us our share in the territories or we go out of the Union" — and because it was the old story, nobody heeded it.

On the last day of the month the magnetic wires carried the news to every part of the Union that John Caldwell Calhoun was no more.

To him more than to any other man we owe it that slavery was tolerated for so many years by the most democratic and progressive commonwealth the world has ever known. It was not a crime, it was a misfortune, that the most subtle intellect which the Union produced could not see that he was fighting for a curse, a mildew, a dead thing killed by the march of progress.

CHAPTER IV

A MEMORABLE DAY IN THE SENATE

THREE days after the reading of Calhoun's speech in the Senate, Webster delivered his Seventh of March oration. It is the only speech in our history known by the date of its delivery. It was the turning point in the action of Congress, in the life of Webster, in the history of our country.

As early as nine o'clock that morning crowds poured into the Capitol in hot haste. At twelve o'clock, the hour of meeting, the Senate chamber — its gallery, floor and even the lobbies — was filled to its utmost capacity. The very stairways were dark with men, who hung on one another like bees in a swarm.

The House of Representatives was nearly deserted. An adjournment would hardly have emptied it more completely. The Speaker, it is true, remained in his chair, but no business of importance was attended to. Members knew that the success or failure of the Compromise depended on Mr. Webster's speech and they all rushed to hear him.

The Supreme Court of the United States, the most august court in the land, now sits in the chamber whose walls echoed the senatorial speeches of Webster, Clay and Calhoun. Beneath the rear wall is a row of columns of variegated gray marble with white Ionic capitals. In the centre of this was placed the chair of the President of the Senate, draped by crimson curtains, as you still see it, and surmounted by a hovering eagle. On the dais below him were the clerks, while the desks of the senators occupied the broad semicircular space on the floor, now reserved for the officers of the court and the counsel.

On this memorable seventh of March the floor, as well as the gallery, was brilliant with the gay bonnets and colored dresses of the feminine friends of the senators, the most gallant of them giving up their seats to their fair guests. Mrs. Beverly and Margaret were among those thus honored, and Jack stood with his father against the wall near the President's chair. Master Twiggs had elected to sit in the gallery to help David point out the dignitaries to Annie Laurie.

There were many dignitaries that day. Millard Fillmore occupied the conspicuous seat erected for the second official of the government. On his right, near the aisle leading to the front door, was Cass, his sleepy looking eyes occasionally glancing at the gallery, then at the crowd pressing in below. Benton was in his well-known place, leaning back in his chair, and giving all, who desired, a full view of his person. Next him was a vacant seat; a vacant seat in such a crowd excited attention.

"Whose seat is that?" went the whisper around.

"Calhoun's," was the answer. "He's not well enough to be out."

"Oh!" Annie Laurie clutched David's arm and nodded towards a giant of a man coming down the aisle. Both boys laughed.

"That's Sam Houston," Twiggs said. "He doesn't bite — he really doesn't — but if he catches you looking at him he'll whittle a little heart out of one of those sticks piled by his desk and send it to you. He lived so long among the Indians that he got in the habit of wearing a blanket and now he can't do without it. That hat he's got on his head is called a sombrero. There now, he's taken it off. Don't you wish you had hair like that? As soon as David's whiskers sprout, he's going to let them grow like Sam Houston's. Aren't you — "

"There's Webster," David interrupted, bending eagerly forward and pointing to the door.

"That's Jack's model of perfection," said Twiggs. "Jack is plumb crazy about that man. Did you ever see a man walk like that? Why, you know, David, no

man in the world could be as great and grand as Webster looks. I believe that's one reason people think he's great, because he looks it. Now, Toombs — "

"There's Henry Clay," David interrupted again, pointing at the tall, thin old man who walked down the aisle and took his seat near Benton.

So they went on pointing out to Annie Laurie the distinguished men. Webster was quietly writing as though unconscious that all eyes had come to look at him, all ears to hang on his words. Seward, the new senator from New York, entered and seated himself near Chase. The benign looking man with him, the man with the fringe of whiskers framing his face, was Horace Greeley.

It was an extraordinary assemblage, those men on the floor of the Senate come to listen to Daniel Webster on that seventh of March. There were a future Secretary of State, a future Chief Justice, and two future Presidents of the United States, Presidents by the grace of God but not by the choice of the American people. Did any of them realize that it was the most momentous hour in the life of the great man they had come to hear, and no less momentous in the history of their country?

The Senate opened. Mr. Webster folded his papers and put them in his desk. After a few preliminaries were hurried through, he rose majestically. Instantaneously there was a burst of applause. This was heard without, and the great crowd, in the lobbies, on the stairs and in the halls, raised an answering shout. The officers went out and cleared the entrances.

"I wish to speak to-day, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American," he began, and, except for his own voice, there was not more complete silence when the world was without form and void. "It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations, and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions and government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The East, the North, and the stormy South combine to throw the whole sea into commotion, to toss its billows to the skies,

and disclose its profoundest depths. I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. 'Hear me for my cause.'"

When that speech was finished Webster's star had gone under a cloud. The North sent up howls of execration, and the South received it with cold cordiality. On the one hand he had favored a more stringent fugitive-slave law; on the other he had said California must come in as a free state. The North called his a fallen star, and compared him to Benedict Arnold. Then Massachusetts struck the deadliest blow of all. She shut Faneuil Hall, the cradle of liberty, in his face. But, in spite of their howls and insults, his advice was followed and the Compromise passed.

That Seventh of March speech was for the preservation of the Union. Who can say it did not preserve it? Clay's Compromise brought peace. In the ten years that followed the North had time to do what had already been done for the South by Calhoun, — become a unit. Lincoln's star was just rising above the line of clouds on the horizon. Without Lincoln in the White House and a solid North behind him, would the Union have been preserved, could the nation have been welded? The two boys seated in the gallery did not understand the importance of that speech, and many of the men on the floor were equally blind.

That night, on returning from a dinner party, Mr. Stephens found David seated thoughtfully before the fire in their sitting room.

"Thinking about Mr. Webster's speech, my boy?" he inquired.

David raised his eyes with the same questioning, troubled look that had shown in their depths five years before, when paddling up the Savannah River, he had asked his father, "Can't a po' man's son never git edecated?" and later when, seated on the front piazza of Good Hope, he had asked Colonel Twiggs: "Is slavery right?"

Now he looked at Mr. Stephens and questioned:

"Do you know of any way I could earn a little more money?"

"What — what?" Mr. Stephens exclaimed. The boy's face was as honest as day. "Don't you have enough money?" he asked, a little bewildered.

"Oh, I have more than enough. I save some every month, but if I could earn a little more I could send Annie Laurie to school with Margaret; they used to be in the same class."

Then the whole story came out, — the first appearance of the Herricks, the carrying of the abolition tracts to Colonel Twiggs, their school life at Tupelo Academy, the discovery of Yaller Ned's cave, the recapture of Jeffrey, their flight north, his meeting with the little girl on the stairs with the basket of clothes, everything up to the present moment, except that David could not cast a slur on the mother of Annie Laurie, so he held his peace about the story he had learned from Mr. Herrick.

"You think you are willing to work to send her to school?" Mr. Stephens was watching the lad keenly.

"Oh, yes! I'm willing to do anything I can find to do. When we get old enough, we are going to get married."

"Oh," said Mr. Stephens, and he dropped back in his seat with a sigh of relief and the suspicion of a smile. "She is your sweetheart, is she? When you are old enough, you are going to get married?"

David's face was perfectly serious.

"Yes, that's what we agreed in Georgia, the summer they had to come away."

"Then of course we must educate her," said Mr. Stephens. "I will give — "

David shook his head and interrupted.

"You mustn't think I'm not grateful, for I am. I'm just as thankful to you as I can be for everything you've done for me, and — for what you've saved me from; but I couldn't let Annie Laurie be beholden even to you. I'm a boy, and even if you won't let me pay you back in money, there's other ways, but it's different with a girl. I must make the money myself to send her to school; I

wouldn't feel satisfied to have her beholden to anybody."

"Then we must find something for you to do in the evenings," Mr. Stephens replied, and his face was as serious as the boy's.

CHAPTER V

A MAN WHO AFTERWARDS BECAME FAMOUS

"OH, David!" Annie Laurie cried, when David made his appearance at the Herrick cottage one afternoon in the June following Webster's Seventh of March speech. "Oh, David, papa told me when you came to ask you please to step into his room. He wants to see you a minute."

She and Twiggs were standing on a table putting up a curtain. Margaret was seated on the piano stool, sewing fringe on a table cover. Jack was in the back yard beating a rug, while Mammy — Mammy, who had nursed three generations of Beverlys, had queened it over three generations of Beverly servitors and scorned to wash a pocket-handkerchief for her own use — was down on her knees washing the floor. A wonderful thing had happened the day before. David had sent Annie Laurie a piano. He had bought it and paid for it himself. Though he allowed Mr. Stephens to advance the money, accepting his offer gratefully, he expressly stipulated that he was to pay it back with interest.

"As school has closed, I reckon you'll have time to study music. We've been thinking about it for some time. Mr. Stephens got Mrs. Toombs to pick it out," David explained, and Annie Laurie, though her eyes were filled with tears, was not able to say a word of thanks.

The piano was set up in a room which, ever since the Herricks had occupied the little cottage, had been empty and deserted from lack of furniture. Margaret came to see Annie Laurie's new present, and, taking one look, thereupon declared the room must be furnished as a parlor to keep the piano from feeling lonely. Straightway Mrs. Beverly's garret was ransacked and each room in

the house called upon for a donation. When these things, according to her orders, were conveyed to the cottage, the little lady declared her intention of having them arranged to her own satisfaction. Jack and Twiggs had been obeying her orders all the morning, and now that Congress had adjourned for the day David had come to help.

"We'll have to put a frill on the top of that curtain, Laurie," she said, as David went out the room. "Indeed, we will. The tacks are all showing; it looks horrid."

Twiggs and Annie Laurie turned on the table and stood side by side looking down at her.

"Why, Mammy," Margaret exclaimed, puzzled, "look at them — look at Twiggs and Laurie. They look just like twins."

"It's because Miss Laurie's got her hair cut —" began the old negress, sitting back on her heels and looking up at the boy and girl standing on the table.

"You needn't turn up your nose, miss," Twiggs said, grinning at Annie Laurie. "It's a great compliment to look like me. I look like the beauty of the family, Jack's mother."

Annie Laurie tossed her head and turned her shoulder.

"You'd better be proud of it, Miss Sass-box. Everybody says she was prettier even than mamma. You made a face at me, did you? I'll kiss you for that." Like a flash he had her face between his hands and gave her a rousing smack.

There was a sharp struggle, the table tilted, and they slid down on the pile of rugs. The enraged girl turned on him again, but Twiggs caught her hands and held them, grinning with glee.

"I'll kiss you again — I'll kiss —"

"Twiggs Beverly, you are no gentleman!" Margaret exclaimed, rushing to Laurie's assistance. "Let her go! Let her go, I tell you; I'm —"

A strong hand swept them apart.

"Here, you boy!" Mammy was standing over him while Annie Laurie, her face flushed and her eyes flashing,

had been swept to the other side of the room. "You muster loss yo' senses. You better mind how you cut yo' capers. Fust thing you know I'll take you home, an' tell Miss. Ain't you 'shame t' grin at yo' po' ol' Mammy like dat, now, ain't you?"

Twiggs looked up into the old woman's face, smiling sweetly.

"My, but it was good," he said, and he smacked his lips and bobbed his head in enjoyment.

Mammy lifted her head and rolled up her eyes.

"Oh, de good Lord, spar dis boy! I dunno whar he —"

"Why, Mammy," Twiggs began, getting up from his seat on the rugs, and his voice was the essence of innocence. "I didn't —"

"You needn't try t' talk t' me in dat honey voice," Mammy interrupted, with dignified severity. "I knows what you done. Ef you don't mind, I'll take you straight home t' yo' mother. She'll know how t' cure yo' foolishness, I reckon. She ain't a-gwine t' put up with yo' shines, an' I'll take you t' her, too, you understan'."

"Why, what's the matter?" Jack exclaimed, coming in from the yard with the rug over his shoulder.

"Twiggs has —" Margaret began indignantly.

"Oh, nothing much," her brother interrupted. He was sitting on the table, complacently swinging his legs. "I kissed Annie Laurie once and she got mad because I didn't do it again." He grinned at the indignant girl.

"Why, Twiggs Beverly, I didn't know you could be so horrid." Margaret was disgusted.

"You see, Jack, it's this way," continued Master Twiggs. "When a fellow makes up his mind to marry a girl, it's the fashion for him to spend months and months and years and years coaxing her, and ten to one she's made up her mind to do it already." Here he cut his eyes at Annie Laurie and Margaret, and, finding them gazing at him in indignant wonder, he went on. "If a fellow would only tell a girl flat and plain that he intends to marry her and then go on about his business,

things would be different. Of course, she would get mad at first, just as Annie Laurie has. But, after a while — a month or a year — if he didn't pay any more attention to her, she'd begin to get curious, and then mighty uneasy. Finally, when he got ready she'd be ready too. She wouldn't keep him on pins and needles, as she does when he tries the coaxing plan. That's the way I'm going to manage Annie Laurie!"

"You won't get her," his sister exclaimed. "She's going to marry David. She told me so, didn't you, Laurie?"

Annie Laurie blushed and hung down her head, but Twiggs continued to swing his legs and grin gleefully.

"Shucks, by the time she's grown she won't give David a second thought. I've picked her out for myself and — you'll see — when she grows up, she'll marry me."

"I suppose *you* think you can get any girl you choose to pick out, too?" Margaret said, turning on Jack with indignant scorn.

"Oh, no," Jack answered, and he shook his head and looked serious indeed. "I know it will take all the coaxing I can do to get any girl to marry *me*." Wise Jack!

"I don't see why it should." Margaret's scorn had lessened perceptibly. "You're not half as conceited as Twiggs. I'm ashamed of him."

"Never mind, she'll marry me all the same," Twiggs replied, and he spoke with conviction. "Come, honey darling," he said, turning to Annie Laurie, "and help your husband finish putting up this curtain."

"Don't you do it, Laurie! Make him put it up by himself," Margaret cried. "He's a mean, horrid boy! Come and help me sew the fringe on this cover."

But Annie Laurie, after the contrary manner of her sex, obeyed Twiggs. Jack, looking on, was glad for more reasons than one that Twiggs was Margaret's brother, and he couldn't help feeling just a bit sorry for David.

All this while, David was being questioned and cross-questioned by Mr. Herrick and his friend Captain John

Brown, a tall, farmer-looking man, with a clean-shaven face, a strong mouth and quick, kindly blue eyes. There was a subtle something about his eyes, or perhaps it was the droop at the corners of his mouth, which reminded close observers of Mr. Herrick, and of a few other faces they had seen in life, and of a picture, maybe, of a man who had sacrificed his life for a principle. David saw the subtle expression and like many other young people mistook the effect for the cause. They were both "nigger stealers."

He had met Captain Brown at the Herricks' before. Once he had brought him a map from the Library of Congress and had helped him and Mr. Herrick trace certain roads through the mountains of Virginia and Pennsylvania.

To-day Captain Brown's first question was:

"I hear you have been having pretty rough weather in Congress?"

"Yes," David assented cheerfully, "things have been looking stormy, but it is pretty sure now that the resolutions will soon pass."

"With that hellish fugitive-slave clause unchanged?" Brown demanded.

"The representatives from the South will never let it pass with that trial by jury clause in it, sir," David replied.

"No jury would ever be found in the North that would return a man to bondage, nor punish him for defending his right to liberty. The South has found that out, has it?" Captain Brown's eyes shone like burning coals.

"We are not asleep, sir." It was the first time the boy had ever included himself among the defenders of slavery, and his former teacher was quick to notice it.

"Who spoke to-day?" Mr. Herrick asked.

"Mr. Toombs made about the most noticeable speech in the House, I reckon."

Captain Brown and Mr. Herrick exchanged glances.

"What did he have to say?"

"Well, —" David was deliberate; he wished to be

truthful and at the same time courteous to his host — " the extreme Northern members, the Free Soilers and Abolitionists, were asked if they would, under any circumstances, vote for the admission of a new slave state into the Union. They refused to say they would. Then Mr. Toombs said if the North deprived the South of its just share in the territories he for one would strike for independence."

Captain Brown left his seat and began to tramp up and down the room excitedly.

" He's a traitor — he's a traitor — he should be hanged," he exclaimed.

" That is just what the President has threatened to do with him," Mr. Herrick asserted pleasantly.

" What! " both Brown and David cried in the same breath. " Hang Toombs? "

" President Taylor believes there is a conspiracy to disrupt the Union and he has threatened to hang the conspirators. He specified Toombs." Here Mr. Herrick hesitated, glancing at David before he went on. " He specified Toombs and that arch-traitor Davis."

" Jeff Davis? " Brown asked.

The school teacher nodded; then he turned to David.

" What do you know about Jefferson Davis, my boy? "

" Why, nothing much! He's a new man in the Senate, from Mississippi, appointed by the governor to fill an unexpired term. But I don't think it's true that the President threatened to hang him, Mr. Herrick, though he may have made that threat against Mr. Toombs. You know Colonel Davis is President Taylor's son-in-law."

" Ex-son-in-law you mean," Captain Brown corrected. " The President's eldest daughter fell in love with him while he was a lieutenant in the regular army. President Taylor would not give his consent — he was Colonel Taylor then — but his sister, Mrs. John Taylor of Lexington, to prevent a scandal, had them married in her house. The first Mrs. Davis lived only a few months, but Taylor never became reconciled and never spoke to Davis until they met during the Mexican war. Old

Rough and Ready will not hesitate to hang him as high as Haman, if he catches him plotting against the Union."

"Is Stephens a friend of Davis?" Herrick asked.

"I have never heard Mr. Stephens mention Colonel Davis, but I have heard Mr. Toombs say that when Davis was in Congress he was very bitter against all representatives who were advocates of the Union and that he called Mr. Stephens 'the little pale star from Georgia.'"

After David had gone, Mr. Herrick told Captain Brown that Alexander H. Stephens was the other man who had been threatened with hanging by President Taylor.

"Then there'll be no secession during this administration, nor any extension of slave territory. I'll trust Old Rough and Ready for that," said Captain Brown. "If he'd hang Daniel Webster, I'd like him all the better."

CHAPTER VI

WHEN THE CONSTITUTION WAS PUBLICLY BURNED

FOUR years have passed since the day we left the five children and Mammy making Annie Laurie's piano feel at home in the Herrick cottage, and many things have happened. Within a month from that happy June day Zachary Taylor was laid in his grave and Millard Fillmore became President of the United States. After a battle of more than seven months the Compromise Resolutions, fugitive slave bill and all, had passed both the Senate and the House and become a law. For a time there was peace. Then the North declared that it had been duped and refused to become slave-catchers for the South; whereupon the South began to chafe and vehemently demand the return of their chattels.

It was then, in March of 1852, that the work of a woman stepped to the front in American politics. " Uncle Tom's Cabin " was published. Never but once before has a novel produced such an immense effect. That one exception is the book wherein the woman says: " I'd rather be the wife of a charcoal-burner than the mistress of a king."

That book did not hurl Pompadour from her seat of power, but it formed the ideas of the youth of France who in their manhood led the revolution. So " Uncle Tom's Cabin " did not cause the abolition of the Fugitive Slave Law, but it appealed to the women and boys of the Union. The opinions of the mothers of America have always had a potent influence with their sons. God grant that they always may! The boys in their teens in 1852 were voters in 1860. They formed the mighty Republican party, and their mothers were behind them, whose existence was based on opposition

to the extension of slavery. It was they who elected Lincoln.

It was the summer after the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" that Henry Clay died. In the following autumn, on a beautiful Sunday morning, an Indian summer's day, Webster's soul went out with the tide, and the world seemed lonesome indeed. A few days later a new President was elected by the Democrats. The old Whig party was in the last throes of dissolution, choked to death, trying to swallow the Fugitive Slave Law. The next excitement for the country was furnished by Senator Stephen A. Douglas and took the form of the famous Kansas-Nebraska bill. It was the row in Congress over this bill that kept Mr. Stephens in Washington while David went to Framingham with Jack and Twiggs.

It was about the middle of June that Mr. Stephens coming into David's room late one evening found him busily writing, with a pile of legal looking documents on the table at his elbow. The congressman paused in the doorway and looked the boy over attentively. He was taller, more matured, but he lacked the vigor of perfect health which had characterized his appearance when he first came to Washington from Georgia. There was an unmistakable languor in the droop of his shoulders the veins on his forehead, where the curling brown hair was brushed carelessly back, were too distinctly visible, and the closely compressed lips and sternly set jaw proved that it was will, not inclination, that was forcing his pen along so rapidly.

"You are working too hard, my boy," Mr. Stephens said, laying his hand affectionately on David's shoulder. "Mrs. Beverly was speaking about it to me this evening. All you children have been going too hard and you the hardest of them all. Mrs. Beverly is going to take Margaret and Laurie to the country next week. Jack is going to Framingham to visit his grandmother and Twiggs is going with him. They both want you to go along and I want you to go."

That is how it happened that David saw the seventy-

eighth birthday of our Union celebrated in Framingham, Massachusetts.

It was hot even for the 4th of July, but the trains from Boston, Milford and Worcester had come in packed and the crowd had already begun to gather, when the three boys, under the guardianship of Cæsar, Twiggs' body-servant, reached the public square where the celebration was to take place. The negro's quick eyes were the first to notice the unusual appearance of the platform.

"Hi!" exclaimed Cæsar. "Who's daid? The President must be daid, Mahse Twiggs. Jes' look at dat flag over dat platform."

"Well, I'll — be — durned," his young master drawled, and his amazement was as great as that of his slave. "Draped in mourning with the Union down. What does this foolishness mean, Jack?"

"Twiggs, you know grandmother warned us. This celebration is in the hands of abolitionists; nobody ever knows what William Lloyd Garrison is going to do. You see, there on the front of the platform are the mottoes he has at the top of the *Liberator*, — 'Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind' and 'No Union with Slavery.'"

"And two white flags bordered with black — Kansas and Nebraska — the two virgin territories. He'd better put a few splashes of red on Kansas to show where David's friend, Captain John Brown, has been at work. What is the meaning of those other two mottoes — 'Virginia' and 'Redeem Massachusetts'? What —"

"Sonny, be ye wanting to know th' meaning o' them texs?" The man who spoke to Twiggs was a shrivelled little fellow, neither old nor young, with very much the look of having been born out of time. His trousers were cut for high-water, while his long coat tail would have been wet at the lowest of low tides.

The Southern boy looked at him, and straightway the devil which is in all healthy boys asserted himself.

"Why, how are you, Deacon Tutwyler?" he exclaimed, and before the man could catch his breath Twiggs had both his hands and appeared to be trying

to shake them off. "No, you have never seen me before, but I recognize you from your likeness to your brother, the Honorable — I should say, Governor Telemachus Tutwyler of Georgia."

"Wal, I want t' know!" Deacon Tutwyler cried, amazed, his nasal twang grating like a newly sharpened file. "So Telly's bean 'lected governor, has he? Wal, I want t' know!"

"Not yet, but he will be, just as soon as the Democratic party nominate him, you know," Twiggs assured him, speaking with the greatest cordiality. "He's such a sincere advocate of the extension of slavery. He bought twenty at a recent auction in Savannah. You are not in favor of re-opening the slave-trade, I believe, deacon?"

"Wal, I can't say as I be, but Telly's business is fixed different from mine, and, see here, young man," the deacon went on, "business is business — what's one man's meat is another man's pison. Telly lives South and owns niggers. I live in Massachusetts and helped the crowd that tried to break in the court house to rescue Burns. What, never heard of Anthony Burns? Wal, I want t' know!"

If Twiggs was not speaking the truth, neither Jack nor David corrected him. So Deacon Tutwyler proceeded to enlighten the party as to who and what Anthony Burns was. He enjoyed the recital, and they evidently found his story interesting.

Anthony Burns, according to this New Englander, was a colored man, who, having escaped from bondage, was arrested during the past spring in the heart of Boston. After a night spent in jail he was taken manacled to the United States Court for examination. A young lawyer, Richard H. Dana, offered the negro his services and the negro declined them. Thereupon, Theodore Parker, coming forward, told him that he was the minister of the gospel appointed as special pastor of fugitive slaves. He urged the negro to accept counsel. Between the two, Dana and Parker, the negro was finally made to see his rights and said:

"Well, gentlemen, you may do as you have a mind about it."

The way these gentlemen had a mind to do, according to Deacon Tutwyler's story, was to call a meeting at Faneuil Hall. There Parker and Wendell Phillips urged their fellow-countrymen, who packed the hall to overflowing, to defy the law of their country and to do anything rather than have the negro returned to his master. From Faneuil Hall the excited crowd rushed out, two thousand strong, a roaring mob, and attacked the court house where Burns was confined.

In the mêlée one of the marshal's posse was killed and Thomas W. Higginson, one of the leaders of the mob, got a sabre-cut. Two companies of artillery were ordered out and the mob retired. The next week, after a five days' trial, the negro was adjudged to his owner.

Franklin Pierce, as President of the United States, had just signed the Kansas-Nebraska act, which virtually threw open every state in the Union to slavery. This outbreak was the first result of the new law. Boston was full of people; during the entire week men from all parts of Massachusetts had been flocking thither. The United States authorities and the mayor were prepared for an attempt at rescue. A large detachment of police and twenty-two companies of Massachusetts soldiers guarded the streets through which Burns passed. The procession accompanying him was made up of one United States artillery battalion, one platoon of United States marines, the marshal's posse of one hundred and twenty-five guarding the fugitive, two more platoons of marines, one field-piece, and yet another platoon of marines as a guard for the field-piece.

All along the line of march windows were draped in mourning; from one opposite the old state-house was suspended a black coffin on which were the words, "The funeral of liberty;" and the people who packed the street hissed, and groaned, and cried, "Shame! Shame!"

This was the same Boston, the same street, through which William Lloyd Garrison had been dragged with a rope about his neck, twenty years before, because he had

made a speech against slavery! Progress is fate! Who is strong enough to war against fate?

Before Deacon Tutwyler finished his story the meeting was called to order, the officers of the day were elected, William Lloyd Garrison, president. Then an anti-slavery hymn was sung. After that an elderly gentleman arose and explained the mottoes about which Twiggs had been so curious.

"Redeem Massachusetts," he said, pointing to the motto, draped in crape, "chained to Virginia," — here he indicated the motto decorated with brilliant ribbons, — "by links of cotton and crouching under the whip of the slave-driver." He reminded his audience of Virginia's recent triumph in securing Anthony Burns, urged them to stand by the anti-slavery platform and, by so doing, redeem defeated Massachusetts.

Then Mr. Garrison came forward and what a shout and clapping of hands there was! He made a vehement speech, full of hard words and bitter denunciation. It was a bad, bad world and the people were worse than the world, but of all the dens of iniquity the slave-holding states were the most atrocious!

"What of the Southern church?" he asked; then he answered, "A cage of unclean birds, and the synagogue of Satan. What of the Southern clergy? Indicating slavery as a divine institution and branding abolition as of the devil! What of the Southern press? Infernal in spirit and language to all who avow their hostility to slavery and eager to turn them over to the tender mercies of the mob!"

"Your friend Garrison and Mr. Sumner must have studied the same dictionary," whispered Twiggs to Deacon Tutwyler.

"Have you heard Charles Sumner? Yes. Wal, they tell me he's a greater man than Dan'l Webster."

"Mr. Webster was the greatest statesman the country has ever produced. He was a gentleman and not afraid of any man alive. Mr. Sumner," — the boy's eyes flashed and he clenched his fist — "is a foul-mouthed liar. I've heard him lie, and I've seen him eat his own

words. He's no more to be compared to Webster than the devil to the angel Gabriel."

The man drew back and looked the fiery young fighting-cock over.

"Gosh!" he exclaimed. Then he looked at the other two boys. "Be ye all from Georgia?"

"I am," David snapped. If he didn't approve Twiggs' conduct, there was nothing to show it.

"I was not born in the South," Jack said; "but I agree with all my cousin has said about Mr. Webster and Mr. Sumner."

"Wal, I want t' know!" Deacon Tutwyler cried. "You've heard both Webster and Sumner, eh? You must be sons of some of them rich cotton planters what Telly's always braggin' on knowing? I calculate when voting time comes you must be worth more than we fellows at the North, eh?"

Twiggs drew his slender figure up to its full height.

"When I reach my majority," he answered, "my vote will have as much weight as the vote of one hundred and eighty non-slave-owners. My mother owns three hundred slaves and I am her only male representative."

"I calculated it was something like that," Tutwyler said, and his expression was one of infinite shrewdness. "If the Constitution of the United States fixed my value that much above other men, I guess I'd strut, too."

"What is old Garrison up to now?" Twiggs walked up nearer the outskirts of the crowd and the others followed him.

"I will now perform an action as a testimony of my own soul, of the estimation in which I hold the pro-slavery laws of our infamous Congress," Mr. Garrison cried. "This, my friends, is a copy of the accursed Fugitive Slave Law." He held out a fluttering sheet of printed paper. Then he cast it on a basin of coals that was seated on the front of the platform, and, as the paper flamed up, he lifted his hands. "Let all the people say, Amen!" he cried.

"Here is the decision of Edward G. Loring in the case of Anthony Burns. You all know its history — how under the protection of the President of the United States a slave-catcher from Virginia not only knocked the abolitionists of Massachusetts down but spit in our faces after we were down." He threw the paper on the coals, then asked: "What do you say, ye children of Freedom?"

There was a roar of applause, the people shouting and crying, "Amen!"

"Brothers and fellow-countrymen," he shouted. "This is the Constitution of the United States, the source and parent of all other atrocities. It is a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell." He cast it on the fire, then raised his hands to heaven. "So perish all compromises with tyranny!"

A mighty shout of "Amen!" went up.

Then sharp and clear sounded a chorus of wrathful hisses.

"He's burning the Constitution," Twiggs cried, and he wrenched himself free from his cousin's grasp. He sprang up on a barrel, pushing the man who occupied it sprawling into the crowd. "You're a damned traitor, sir," he shouted, shaking his fist at Garrison. "You're a damned —"

Jack seized him by the arm and a struggle followed.

"Put them out!" called a voice from the platform. "Put him out! Put the rowdy out!" was echoed by the crowd. Deacon Tutwyler had slipped away.

The barrel gave way and Twiggs came down on his feet. "Let me go!" he panted, trying hard to shake himself free; but Jack held on. "He's burning the Constitution! Let me —"

"It's only a copy — and he's a fanatic — they are all fanatics," Jack replied. "David, David, help me make him come home."

"Twiggs, you promised —" David began.

"Oh, hell!" the boy replied. "You with old Herrick, and Jack with Garrison! You've got about as much

patriotism as a fish has blood. I'll not listen to another word that scoundrel says. I'm going home. Cæsar, you black rascal, you can come with me or stay here and go to the devil."

"Laws, Mahse Twiggs, I'd jes' as lieve go t' de devil as stay here wid dese white trash, settin' cheek-by-jowl wid a passle of runaway niggers. I don't blame Unc' Charlie fer comin' back home, no sech white trash fer dis here nigger." Caesar followed, grinning, the only happy member of the party.

As they were entering Mrs. Clinton's gate Jack asked:

"Twiggs, how on earth did you know that man's name was Tutwyler? He doesn't look any more like Telemachus than I do."

Twiggs stopped and laughed.

"Oh, yes, he does. They are both typical New England time-servers. One has remained here in the hard climate and stony soil; the other has struck it rich in the South. Both are typical time-servers, cheap enthusiasts, and it is stamped all over them. I saw this man down at the store this morning. He was selling cheese. The clerk told me his name, and instantly I spotted him for Eusebius' rich uncle who lives in a palace in Boston."

Here Twiggs stopped to chuckle again. "Do you know what the clerk said? He said Deacon Tutwyler is so stingy that he skins his fleas for their hide and tallow. He married his second wife about a month ago and brought her to Framingham, just two miles from his farm, on her 'wedding-tower,' in a milk-wagon. He bought her four sticks of candy and when she had eaten two he wrapped the other two up and told her she had better take them home and save them for company. Such are the people who preach against us for keeping human beings in slavery. Cæsar, what would your wife have said if you had given her four sticks of candy for a wedding present?"

The negro grinned sheepishly, and shook his head, visions of Malaria's indignation rising before his eyes.

"She'd a' boxed my jaws fer me; dat's what Malaria would've done, I reckon."

"And you would have deserved it, sir, you black rascal."

CHAPTER VII

AN INAUGURAL BALL

"ARE you sure my hoop sets right, Malaria?" Miss Margaret Beverly was being dressed for her first ball. "Last Sunday Twiggs said my hoop must've had the toothache, my skirts were so much bigger on one side than the other. I wouldn't have them wrong to-night, when I make my first bow before Miss Harriet Lane, not for the world. Set a candle on the floor and watch while I turn around."

Even that critical inspection didn't satisfy the little lady. As the maid lifted her gauzy skirts to slip them over her head, she ducked and ran towards the door of the adjoining room.

"Wait, Malaria," she commanded. "Wait, I'll ask Laurie." She threw open the door, then stopped, uttering a sound like a gasp of surprise. "You are, Laurie! You are!" she exclaimed. "Twiggs always said you would be! You are perfectly beautiful!"

There, in the middle of the room, stood Annie Laurie, grown to be a young lady of fifteen; and beautiful indeed she was. Her simple dress was of soft white mull with a cluster of tucks around the bottom of the deep Spanish flounce. Her hair, drawn back from her forehead and tied at the nape of her neck with a bow of ribbon, fell in a shower of shining golden curls below her waist. Dorcas, a Beverly maid, was fastening on a sash to match the blue ribbon on her hair when Margaret entered.

"It's the dress," Annie Laurie replied, blushing, and her eyes sparkled with pleasure. "Isn't it beautiful? Wasn't it kind of Mr. Stephens to give it to me? And wasn't it lovely of your mother to have it so beautifully made? It is —"

" Indeed, it is not the dress, it's you," Margaret interrupted. " You look like an angel, only a thousand times more beautiful. Come let mamma see you." She whisked Annie Laurie across the hall and into the room where Mrs. Beverly was dressing. " There, mamma, talk about Addie Cutts and Theresa Chalfant, if you please, but neither of them can hold a candle to Laurie. Look at her! Isn't she beautiful? "

" Oh, Margaret! " Annie Laurie cried and turned to make her escape, but Mrs. Beverly stopped her.

" Your dress is very becoming, my dear," the lady said, as she kissed the girl's cheek affectionately. " Come, Margaret, unless you make haste you will keep us all waiting. Twiggs is becoming impatient; he has been here twice already."

That was a memorable evening for both Margaret and Annie Laurie, their first inaugural ball. Four years before they had seen the imposing inauguration procession with which Franklin Pierce had been inducted into office. They had sat on the portico of the Capitol and heard him say, " I affirm," instead of the time honored " I swear;" they had watched as he placed his right hand on the Bible and held his left hand aloft, instead of pressing his lips to the sacred book as all Presidents before him had done. To-day his term expired, and, having proved himself a thoroughly passive, timid gentleman, he was quitting the Presidential chair without having advocated a single measure or solved one of the vexed problems that threatened the life of the republic.

Had his successor, also elected by the Democrats, been an Andrew Jackson, or one of two or three others, the incipient rebellion which Mr. Pierce bequeathed would have been promptly stamped out. Unfortunately the American citizen to whom Chief Justice Taney that day administered the oath as Chief Magistrate of the Union was yet a trifle more passive and a trifle more timid. Nobody ever accused Franklin Pierce or James Buchanan of telling unseemly jokes, of smoking clay pipes or of wearing yarn socks within the sacred precincts of the White House. No more were they ever accused of

taking any active steps to prevent the deluge of blood that came so promptly after them.

As no hall in Washington was large enough to hold more than six hundred people, a temporary annex to the City Hall was built for the Inauguration Ball. The interior was decorated with flags of all nations and the ceiling was of white cloth, studded with golden stars which twinkled in unison with the feet of the dancers. Only two Republican members were present on this memorable occasion, but there were throngs of Southerners and Democrats, both from the North and West. At eleven o'clock President Buchanan, accompanied by his niece, Miss Harriet Lane, arrived.

Then several things happened very quickly.

The great ball-room resounded with applause. Major Magruder received the Presidential party and discreetly refrained from making a speech, a piece of thoughtfulness on the part of the gallant soldier which called forth another burst of hurrahs and hand-clapping. Then the band struck up again, and the people, dropping in line, filed by and shook hands with the President and his handsome niece.

Miss Harriet Lane, for the next four years the first lady of the land, was dressed in a gown of rich white satin trimmed with sprays of pink roses, and a necklace of many strands of pearls clasped her throat. As she greeted Mrs. Beverly, she smiled and said:

"I didn't know that you had two daughters." She glanced at Annie Laurie, who, with Twiggs at her elbow, was following close after Margaret.

"I haven't," Mrs. Beverly replied; then, seeing the direction of the young lady's eyes, she added, "Laurie is a great friend of Margaret's but in no way related."

"How very remarkable!" said Miss Lane. "She is strikingly like your son. Don't you see the likeness?"

Mrs. Beverly looked and was shocked, not by the likeness, for that idea was blotted out of her mind instantly, but by something more important, the absorbed expression with which Twiggs was regarding Annie Laurie. There was no mistaking it. As far as he was concerned,

she was the only person in the room. About the girl Mrs. Beverly was in doubt, until Twiggs bent over to her ear, whispering. Annie Laurie looked up, answering with a smile. Instinctively Mrs. Beverly glanced at David. His face was the picture of contentment. He seemed perfectly happy to walk beside Annie Laurie and let Twiggs, on the other side, do the talking.

Mrs. Beverly stepped aside with the intention of taking her son's arm, but just at that moment the dancing began and Twiggs whisked Annie Laurie from the crowd and made off with her towards the music.

"Twiggs!" his mother exclaimed; and there was a note of remonstrance in her voice.

The young gentleman heard her and glanced back over his shoulder, nodding and smiling. Then David acted just as he had the day, seven years before, when he took Annie Laurie to the Capitol for the first time. He stepped back and took the one Twiggs left.

"Will you dance, Mrs. Beverly?" he asked.

The lady smiled and shook her head. She wondered if he had seen the tears in her eyes.

"No, my dear, I'm getting too old for that," she answered, taking his arm. "But I will allow you to conduct me to Mr. Stephens. I see him across the hall with Mr. and Mrs. Toombs and a party of our friends."

The Georgia Congressman saw her coming and came to meet her.

"Have you seen Annie Laurie?" she asked him, after she had sent David off to get a partner. "I had no idea the child was so grown up and beautiful."

"She is very beautiful," Mr. Stephens assented. "I have been watching her and Margaret. They remind me of you and Marion and the first time I saw you."

"I suppose it is Annie Laurie's coloring. Miss Lane fancied she looks like Twiggs."

"I almost fancied a likeness myself," said Mr. Stephens. "But I suppose it is, as you say, because their coloring is exactly the same."

For the first time Mrs. Beverly felt a resentment against having Annie Laurie put on the same footing

with her own daughter. Though she was a generous woman with high ideals, it was hard for her to think only of Annie Laurie's loveliness and forget that her father was a poor abolitionist school teacher, with a not altogether spotless record, that her mother had taken in washing, and that the child herself owed her clothes and the few advantages she had had to a boy who himself worked for his living.

"So we really lose you next week?" Mr. Stephens asked, later in the evening. "You have fully determined to take the children abroad?"

"We leave to-morrow," she answered promptly, though not until that instant had she dreamed of such a move.

"To-morrow!" Mr. Stephens showed his surprise.

"Yes, I have decided it is best. The children do not know it yet. I didn't care to spoil their last evening together."

If Mrs. Beverly was not telling the truth, her manner gave no evidence of it.

"Well, my boy will feel lost without them," the Congressman said, and he glanced affectionately across the hall, where David, tall and graceful, could be seen dancing with Margaret. "I understand that Jack has decided not to go?"

"Yes," Mrs. Beverly answered regretfully, "and I feel that I should not urge him. Mr. Clinton's resignation of his seat in the Senate, as you know, takes effect next month, and Jack feels that he needs him; he is all he has."

Here they both sighed and tears filled Mrs. Beverly's eyes.

After the first dance David was making his way towards Annie Laurie when he saw Mr. President Buchanan leading her out. His eyes brightened and he smiled. Perhaps never in his life would his heart throb with purer, more unselfish pleasure. Whatever may have been the political shortcomings of the fifteenth President of the United States he was a gentleman of refinement, with courtly manners. He had represented his country

with dignity and discretion at the court of the Czar of all the Russias, while as minister to England he not only filled his position honorably but won the friendship of the queen. There are those who claim that this friendship stood the Union in good stead during the darkest days of the Civil War.

When David crossed the room to Margaret she was surrounded by a group of impatient gentlemen all urging their claims for a dance. The young beauty was obdurate.

"I owe it to David," she said, and she took his arm.

As they glided away to the strains of the Jenny Lind waltz, Margaret looked up at him, smiling archly.

"I owed it to you, David, because the President and Twiggs have treated you so badly. I knew you would need consolation."

"I suppose in the next quadrille Jack will need consolation," David replied, smiling down at her.

Margaret's chin went up in the air.

"Oh, I don't know. He seemed perfectly willing to be rid of me after the first set. There he is, on the other side of the hall, waltzing with Kate Chambers. But I am going to dance with the President. He asked us for the second and third square dances. When I told him that Laurie was a month the older, he took her first."

At the end of that waltz David made for the spot where he had last seen Annie Laurie, but Twiggs was ahead of him again. They were taking their places for the next square dance. It was the lancers and opposite them were Mr. President Buchanan and Miss Margaret Beverly. David secured Miss Kate Chambers for a partner, but they were too late to get in the President's set.

"How dead in love Mr. Twiggs Beverly is with his *fiancée!*" Miss Chambers remarked to David.

"His what?" David cried, and there was no doubt about the genuineness of his surprise.

"Why," said Miss Chambers, "the young lady he is engaged to." She had an idea that her partner had not understood the French word. "Haven't you seen her?

Oh, she's a beauty. All the men in the room are crazy about her. There she is dancing with him, now."

"Why, they are not engaged," he said.

Miss Chambers was not to be convinced.

"I have Mr. Beverly's word for it," she replied. "When Miss Herrick was dancing with the President I tried to tease him about having been cut out, but he wouldn't be teased. He said he had a perfect right to be in love with her; they were engaged and would be married as soon as he returned from abroad. Everybody has been remarking on their devotion. There, look at him when he speaks to her."

David looked and straightway became silent. During the rest of the lancers he appeared so preoccupied that Miss Chambers began to pout and refrained from expressing her regret when it was finished. It was not until after supper that he saw Twiggs and Annie Laurie again. Then Mrs. Beverly had his arm and it was in obedience to her request that he took her to look for them.

They found the two delinquents standing in the moonlight on the steps of the City Hall. Twiggs was on the step below Annie Laurie and their heads were almost on a level. Annie Laurie's face showed distinct and serious in the pale white light, and David saw Twiggs bend and press her hand passionately to his lips.

"Twiggs, my son," Mrs. Beverly's voice was a trifle more even than usual. "I have had a severe headache all the evening, and now that the President and Miss Lane have retired I feel that I really must go home." She stooped and kissed Annie Laurie. "I am glad your first inaugural ball has been such a success, my dear. I will keep my promise to your mother, and see you and David off before I leave."

In the cloak-room Twiggs whispered to Annie Laurie:

"I shall dream of you all night, honey darling, and come to see you in the morning immediately after breakfast."

The only eyes that closed in the Beverly household that night were those of the young mistress and the young master. In spite of her headache Mrs. Beverly

sat up, directing her servants in packing trunks and setting her house in order. It was barely dawn and Cæsar was helping the footman pile the trunks on the wagon at the back door, when she went in and waked Twiggs. She shut the door carefully behind her and it is doubtful if any one besides themselves ever knew what passed between mother and son in that interview.

It was a silent carriage load that drove through the quiet streets to catch the early train to New York, for Twiggs did not open his lips and Margaret was too sleepy to talk. At the last moment, Jack came running, bag in hand, to go with them as far as New York, so there were no good-byes to be said and there was no one to send messages by. The day before their ship sailed, Twiggs wrote a short letter to David, and Margaret a longer one to Annie Laurie, while Mrs. Beverly wrote a whole package of notes. One was to President Buchanan and another to Miss Harriet Lane, and all were given to Jack to be delivered on his return to Washington.

CHAPTER VIII

A FIRE-BRAND

EARLY in the afternoon of October 17th, 1859, as David was on his way from his boarding house to the law school of the Columbian College he was attracted by an excited crowd around the bulletin board of the *National Intelligencer*. Realizing that something of importance was taking place, he crossed the street and wedged himself through the crowd until he could read the bulletin. It ran:

"Baltimore, Oct. 17th. — The following dispatch has just been received from Frederick, but, as it seems very improbable, it should be received with great caution until confirmed:

"'Frederick, Oct. 17. — A.M. — There is an insurrection at Harper's Ferry. A band of armed Abolitionists have full possession of the United States Arsenal. The express train was fired into twice, and one of the railroad hands, a negro, killed while trying to get the train through the town. The insurgents arrested two men who came into town with a load of wheat, took their wagon, loaded it with rifles, and sent them into Maryland. The band is composed of a gang of about two hundred and fifty whites, followed by a band of negroes who are now fighting.'

"Baltimore, Oct. 17. — 10 A. M. — A dispatch received at the railroad office says the affair is greatly exaggerated, and has its foundation in a difficulty at the Armory; also that the negroes have nothing to do with it."

Just as David finished reading the telegrams and was turning to leave, a man came out of the newspaper office and stuck a new dispatch on the board.

"Baltimore, 12.30. — It is apprehended that the affair at Harper's Ferry is more serious than the people here are willing to believe. The telegraph wires are cut from Harper's Ferry; consequently we have no communication beyond Monocacy. The reported stampede of negroes is from Maryland. The train due here early this morning has not yet arrived. There are many wild rumors here, but nothing authentic."

Here David caught sight of a familiar figure, leaving the newspaper office and pushing his way through the crowd.

"Mr. Greeley," he cried, when the gentleman came within speaking distance, "I didn't know you were in Washington, sir?"

Horace Greeley glanced around and, recognizing David, smiled.

"It is hard to realize I am, in this crowd; it seems much more like New York. But why are you here?" Mr. Greeley asked. "I understood that Stephens had refused a re-election."

"So he did, sir. He returned to Georgia last March. I am here to complete my law course." David had turned and was walking across the street with the newspaper man.

"Ah, you'll practice with Stephens, I suppose? Well, you could not have a better adviser nor an abler lawyer. But what do you think of these telegrams?" Mr. Greeley nodded his head back towards the bulletin board.

"Why, I hardly know, sir, what do you think?"

Greeley threw a quick glance at David, then smiled.

"You'll do," he said. "You'll make a good lawyer. Well, I wouldn't be surprised if that first telegram is true and that the trouble at Harper's Ferry is a movement of abolitionists. I understand that the Secretary of War received an anonymous letter in August warning him against such a movement. A gentleman who read the letter told me of it this morning. The writer mentions Harper's Ferry as the point selected for the first outbreak."

David stared at him for a full half-minute, dumb with amazement.

"My God, sir, do you mean you believe that abolitionists have planned an armed attack against the South for the purpose of liberating the slaves?" he finally asked. "That this trouble is only the first blow?"

"Judging by this letter, for the details as I heard them are very exact; and the open letter, which Gerrit Smith addressed to the colored men of Syracuse last August, certainly seems a prediction of the same thing. You remember that letter?"

David nodded assent.

"Well, that and the anonymous communication which Secretary Floyd received are dated within a week of each other."

"Then, sir," said David, and his jaws came together with an ominous snap, "if this news is true, the South will be on fire."

"The North is already on fire, my boy, the worst sort of fire, smouldering within. Think of the opposition, the determined and increasing opposition, which enforcing the slave law has met with in every section of the free States. Think of the bloody fights in California and in Kansas! Mark my words! there will never be another fugitive slave returned to the South, nor another slave state admitted into the Union."

"If that is true, sir, there will be war. The South will never tamely submit to have her property stolen from her and to be cheated out of her just share of the territories."

Greeley raised his hand in expostulation.

"The South cannot roll back the tide of social progress, David. You ought to see that. It is such young men as you, whom we are depending on to help us rid the country of the curse. You know why the emancipation clause was stricken from the Constitution. You are not a follower of the madmen who are threatening the country with a reign of anarchy. There are enough loyal men in the South to prevent secession. Georgia is divided, so are Mississippi and North Carolina; even in South

Carolina there is a strong party for the Union. Why, there isn't a state among you solid for secession."

"No, sir, they are not solid for secession, but they are solid for states' rights. If the abolitionists are really making movements to liberate our slaves by force we shall be solid for secession."

"You are mistaken," Greeley persisted. "You have been listening to the wild talk of these fire-eaters. Wait until you go south and see the real conditions. I am convinced there will be no secession. You tell Stephens I say so."

"I will tell him, sir. I'm going to write him to-night," David replied, making a move to go. He knew there was no use in trying to convince Mr. Greeley, and he also knew that time would prove the truth of his own words.

"Good-by," Mr. Greeley extended his hand cordially. "If I can do anything for you, you must let me know."

David's face flushed, for he realized the sincerity of the offer and knew the great newspaper man meant even more than he said.

"Thank you, Mr. Greeley, but I've promised Mr. Stephens to devote my time to law this year." He hesitated, then added: "My father left a small tract of land; it had been sold by my mother's second husband, but Mr. Stephens managed to get the money back for me. I have plenty to last until I complete my law course."

"I'm glad to hear it." Mr. Greeley extended his hand again. "Though you don't need me, you mustn't forget me. I like young men. Don't forget to tell Stephens what I say."

When David returned from the law school a new despatch from Baltimore was being put upon the bulletin board.

"There is great excitement here. Our military is moving and several companies are in readiness. It is stated that the President has ordered out the troops, and a special train is now getting ready to take them from this city; that he has also accepted the company at Frederick, and has ordered some of the artillery com-

panies from Old Point. It is now considered there is something serious ahead.

"*Still later.* — The mail train for the west got as far as Sandy Hook. The baggage-master and another party started on foot for the bridge, which they crossed and were taken and imprisoned. They went before the captain of the insurgents, who refused to let anything pass. All of the west-bound trains are lying east of Harper's Ferry."

The crowd was becoming more and more excited. As far as women were concerned, the streets were deserted. The few men acquaintances David met on the streets either nodded to him and hastened on their way, or passed him by unnoticed. Mrs. Carter and two of her lady guests were peering out a front window as he mounted the steps of his boarding-house. The landlady let him in, and such a rattling of chains and drawing of bolts! It was like opening the door of a prison.

"I don't dare leave it unbolted, Mr. David," she explained. "The abolitionists may march into Washington any minute, they say, and God knows what the negroes won't do. Oh, I'm sick and tired of the quarrels and anxiety. Sometimes I hate the very sight of their black faces. We never know when our slave property is safe from the abolitionists; we never know when our lives are safe from slaves. I have all except Dinah locked below stairs, and there I'm going to keep them."

David tried to reassure her and, for a time, she consented to allow her servants to come up-stairs and go about their regular duties. Later in the afternoon, when more alarming telegrams were received and wild rumors spread over the city, she locked them down-stairs again, and, when bed time came she locked them in their quarters, and bolted and barricaded every door and window of the house. Nor was she the only one. Women all over the city, in Virginia, throughout the South, as far as the news had travelled, were doing the same thing, while the men who were not called out to patrol the streets sat up all night with their arms in their hands,

guarding their wives and daughters against a fate worse than death.

All the while David was on his way to the scene of the trouble, Harper's Ferry, expecting God knows what. A few minutes after his return from the law school in the afternoon, Dinah, Mrs. Carter's negro maid, had knocked at his door.

"There's a young lady in the parlor to see you, sah," she said.

"A young lady?" David wouldn't have been more surprised if she had said the devil.

"Yes, sah," the maid hesitated. "The young lady who us' to come here to get yo' wash."

David sprang up. He needed no further explanation. It all came to him in a flash. Mr. Herrick was in some way mixed up in the affair at Harper's Ferry, and he had never thought of it. He went down the stairs two steps at a time, and Annie Laurie met him just within the parlor door.

For more than two years, ever since the memorable evening of Buchanan's inaugural ball, he had held aloof from her. Not that he had stopped paying her expenses at school or that he no longer went to the little cottage! Such a course had never entered his head. He remembered how young she was still; perhaps, after all, she would prefer Twiggs. He loved her, maybe a trifle more, and in any event he determined to give her an opportunity to know her own mind. He would never stand in the way of her happiness. Now as they met in Mrs. Carter's little parlor, all these doubts were swept away. He clasped both her hands tightly between his own as he asked:

"Is he there? Is Mr. Herrick at Harper's Ferry?"

Annie Laurie raised her face to him, and he stooped and kissed her.

"You want me to go for him, dear?"

"Yes, David, if you can," she said, and she smiled through her tears. "Mamma feels sure he has joined Captain Brown, although —"

"Captain Brown!" Light was breaking on David's

mind. If John Brown had transferred his operations against slavery from Kansas to Virginia, people had reason to guard their homes.

"Yes, Captain John Brown is the leader. He has been planning this crusade for years," Annie Laurie assured him. "He came here with two of his sons last July, while you were in Georgia, and rented a small farm in Maryland, just four miles from Harper's Ferry. They pretended to be miners but they really have been collecting arms and recruits —"

"How many recruits did he have?" David asked.

"Papa was there on Thursday and there were only nineteen, but as soon —"

"Nineteen men to attack the government of the United States!" The young man could hardly believe his ears.

"But others will join, David," Annie Laurie cried. "It was the only thing they could do! Congress would not help them. Captain Brown said it was the only way anything was accomplished in Kansas. He believed that if he began a crusade in Virginia the slaves from all over the South would flock to his standard.'"

"Ah, I see," said David dryly. "But, instead of slaves, the militia of Maryland and Virginia, and United States troops are flocking to his standard — with loaded guns in their hands."

"But what could they do, David? It was the only way they could hope to liberate the slaves. Captain Brown said that if the crusade were begun in the stronghold of slavery, then the country would be convinced that —"

The girl's cheeks were flushed and her eyes sparkled with tears. David laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Never mind, dear," he said, "we will talk about Captain John Brown another time. Now I must catch the first train going to Harper's Ferry."

"But, David, will they take you? I heard —"

David drew her against his shoulder and kissed her golden hair.

" Don't you worry, sweetheart. If I have any trouble Horace Greeley is in town and he will manage to get me off some way. I am going to send you home to tell your mother that I have gone to find Mr. Herrick."

CHAPTER IX

A SOUL GOES MARCHING ON

DAVID had ample time to review all the troubles of Kansas that Monday night as he journeyed to Harper's Ferry. Suffice it to say that John Brown was a New Englander born out of time. Had fate sent him during the early days of Massachusetts he would doubtless have distinguished himself as a destroyer of witches, or had he arrived during the religious wars of Europe he would have won everlasting glory as a martyr dying at the stake, or perhaps as a stern captain heaping fagots around future saints. It is sometimes as uncomfortable to be behind the fashion as ahead of it. Progress says, "Keep step."

Kansas was a territory and wanted to become a state. As Mason and Dixon's line had been wiped off the map of the Union by Squatter's Sovereignty — a discovery of Stephen A. Douglas, — settlers poured into the new territory from both the North and the South. When Kansas sent in her application Congress naturally became interested. A searching examination was begun. A scanty sprinkling of slaves was discovered, also a large number of border ruffians, of abolitionists and of Beecher Bibles.

Kansas was sick. Congress disputed about her disease and the cure. It was a case in which everybody knew where the hurt was better than the patient. And everybody knew what medicine was needed and many proceeded to give it. Among the first were Senators Sumner and Seward. They both prescribed more Beecher Bibles, hurling stinging vituperations at all dissenting physicians. Kansas got the books and Charles Sumner

was attacked by Congressman Preston Brooks on the floor of the Senate Chamber.

Of course the dissenters held a consultation. After grave deliberation they began to compound a colagog which later they named the Lecompton Constitution; its principal ingredient was United States troops. It was while this colagog was being compounded that John Brown arrived in Kansas.

Now, John Brown believed that without the letting of blood there could be no remission of sin. Nobody denied the sins of Kansas, so he very promptly began to shed blood pretty freely — mostly that of border ruffians and other champions of slavery. Kansas, with the contrariness common to women, rebelled. Anti-slavery and pro-slavery combined against John Brown. John Brown left Kansas and came to Virginia.

It was Tuesday when David arrived at Harper's Ferry and he was not surprised at the appearance of the little town. There was no mistaking the look of war. The shutters of the stores were all up and the streets bristled with the guns and bayonets of Maryland and Virginia militia, while excited citizens, all armed to the teeth, swarmed around and among the soldiers, packed the yards, the doorways, the windows and the house-tops.

Down the streets was marching, with the precision of clock-work, a company of United States marines. They were strangely armed; the leaders had sledge-hammers while those in the rear were bearing a heavy ladder. A little distance ahead of this compact body of blue figures walked a tall young man wearing the uniform of a lieutenant in the regular army. David, recognizing an old acquaintance, grinned.

"Hello, Lieutenant Stuart," he cried, breaking through the crowd and running forward. "What's up?"

Lieutenant J. E. B. Stuart, glancing over his shoulder and catching sight of David, likewise grinned.

"Oh, Old Ossawatomie Brown has transferred his attentions from bleeding Kansas to Virginia, and we are giving him a party; want to come?"

"Do I? That's what I've been working for all night,"

David replied, and straightway they grinned at each other.

Who ever saw a healthy young American man who wouldn't grin at the suggestion of a row spiced with danger, and the stronger the spice the broader the grin?

"Have you just got in?" Stuart asked, as they moved towards the engine-house.

"Yes. When did you arrive with your — reception committee?" David glanced back at the marines.

"About midnight. Colonel Robert E. Lee is in command. He didn't wish to endanger by a midnight attack the lives of Colonel Washington and the other gentlemen old Brown is holding as hostages, so he sent me under flag of truce to notify Brown of the arrival of United States troops and demand his surrender to the government." Here Lieutenant Stuart smiled as though the recollection was amusing.

"What did Captain Brown say?" asked David.

"That he had learned what the mercy of the government meant in Kansas, — a rope for himself and his men. He preferred an ounce of lead."

"How many has he with him?"

"Hardly a handful, not above forty at the most. It doesn't seem possible, does it, that any man would be fool enough to make a foray like this with such a force? But that's old Brown! I knew him in Kansas. He's so sure that God Almighty has appointed him to exterminate slavery that he never considers the odds against him. If you had heard him name the only terms on which he said he would surrender, you would have thought that he had an army at his back. I am going for his final answer."

"Do you think he has changed his mind?" David asked.

"See that ladder and those sledge-hammers?" Stuart motioned to the heavy implements which the marines were carrying. "Unless old Brown has changed since he left Kansas, we'll need them all to beat down the door of that engine-house. He's barricaded himself in there, you know."

At the door of the engine-house Lieutenant Stuart demanded:

"Are you ready to surrender and trust to the mercy of the government, Captain Brown?"

"No, sir, I prefer to die here," the old Puritan calmly replied.

For a moment there was a breathless pause. John Brown knew, and every man present knew, that he was signing his own death warrant, but he showed not the slightest sign of fear. He drew back and moved away from the port-hole through which he had spoken.

Lieutenant Stuart stepped aside and gave the signal for the attack to begin. The heavy ladder was used as a battering-ram, the door of the engine-house was forced open, and the marines rushed in. It was a short, sharp struggle; then the end! Of the nineteen men who had marched from the Kennedy farm in the drizzling rain the Sunday night before, ten were dead, five were wounded and prisoners, and four escaped. Of the defenders of the governmental authority five had been killed and nine wounded.

The wounded and dead were brought out and laid on the grass. The crowd rushed up and seethed around them. All anger and resentment was engulfed by a feeling of profound astonishment. These six bleeding men stretched on the grass at their feet had dared to lift hand against the United States Government. Unsupported by hope of relief or succor of any sort, they had not only refused to surrender but had fought to the death. And for what? To liberate black slaves on whom they had never set eyes. It was enough to make the world stand still and stare.

When David wedged his way through the crowd a surgeon was dressing the wounds of the leader of the insurgents. It was Captain John Brown. Though he had grown a long beard since the days when David knew him, there was no mistaking him. His clothes were drenched with blood from wounds on his body, he had an ugly gash on his forehead, and his hair and beard were matted and clotted with blood.

David approached the other bloody figures lying near their old leader; then he went back and looked at the half dozen still forms which the soldiers had stretched under the armory walls. He drew a deep breath of relief. Mr. Herrick was not among them. If he had been with them at the time of their attack, then he was among the few who had escaped. That was not like his old teacher, so David felt almost sure that some accident had prevented him from taking part in the expedition. He went down to the railroad station, but the telegraph wires had not been mended and there was no way to get back to Washington before midnight.

A train had just pulled in and the Governor of Virginia stepped off. He was accompanied by other high officials of the state, two companies of militia and a swarm of curious men, old and young, all armed. David allowed himself to be drawn along with the crowd. At the gate of the armory he shook himself loose and followed the governor and his party. The soldiers at the door recognized him and allowed him to pass into the guard-room.

John Brown's wounds had been carefully dressed, his head was bandaged, and he lay stretched out on the floor with his feet to the fire, and his head and shoulders propped up by pillows on the back of a chair.

"My name is John Brown," he was saying, in reply to the Governor's question. "I have been well known as Old Brown of Kansas. Two of my sons were killed here to-day, and I am dying too. I came here to liberate slaves and was to receive no reward. I have acted from a sense of duty and am content to meet my fate; but I think the crowd has treated me badly. This morning when I was lying helpless, they called me a robber. I am no robber. Yesterday I could have killed whom I chose, but I had no desire to kill any person, and I would not have killed a man had they not tried to kill me and my men. I could have sacked and burned the town, but I did not. I have treated kindly the persons I took as hostages, and I appeal to them for the truth of what I say. If I had succeeded in running off slaves this time,

I could have raised twenty times as many men as I have now, for a similar expedition. But I have failed."

"Mr. Brown, who sent you here?" asked Governor Wise. "What was your object in coming?"

"No man sent me here. I came to free the slaves and only for that," the old man answered positively.

"How many men had you?"

"I came to Virginia with eighteen men only, besides myself."

A murmur of amazement ran through the crowd. One elderly gentleman in the front line of spectators held up his hands.

"Attack a town of fourteen hundred inhabitants, the state of Virginia, and the government of the United States with eighteen men!" He shook his head and, glancing at those around him, tapped his forehead significantly.

"Will you tell me who furnished the money for this expedition?" Governor Wise asked.

"I furnished most of it myself. I cannot implicate others."

"How do you justify your act in coming here to Virginia to incite slaves to rebellion against their master?" one of the bystanders asked.

"My friend, I think you are guilty of a great wrong against God and humanity." He looked at the Governor apologetically. "I say it without wishing to be offensive."

The Governor bowed his head. "I understand that," he said.

"I think it would be perfectly right for any one to interfere so far as to free those you wilfully and wickedly hold in bondage. I think I did right. I hold that the Golden Rule, 'Do unto others as ye would have others do unto you,' applies to all who would help others to gain their liberty."

The questioning went on. Trains arrived from Baltimore and Washington with judges, senators, congressmen and numerous lesser lights, each to be answered. Never once did the courage of the old man falter. He

had come to liberate slaves, sent by the voice of God; he would answer all questions about himself, but he would not implicate others. Then they searched the house on the Kennedy farm and found two hundred Sharp's rifles, two hundred revolvers, nine hundred and fifty pikes, and numerous letters and memoranda.

That night when David returned to Washington, the Herrick household was sitting up waiting for him. He showed no surprise at finding Mr. Herrick at home, but the school teacher felt called upon to explain.

"Brown moved sooner than I expected — a week sooner," he said. "By agreement with Brown I went to Boonsborough last Sunday to confer with a friend and I was to spend Monday night at the Kennedy farm. Before I reached there I heard the wild rumors sent out from Harper's Ferry. Of course I realized at once that Brown had moved with an insufficient force and the expedition had failed. The government will give him a term of years, I suppose."

"The State of Virginia will hang him, sir," David replied.

"What! They will not dare. The country will rise —"

"The country has risen, sir. Every man in Virginia is armed, every man in the South, and the women go with pistols in their pockets. The regular term of the circuit court for Jefferson County, Virginia, begins next week. The court sits in Charleston, ten miles from Harper's Ferry. Captain John Brown will be indicted and tried there. I tell you, Mr. Herrick, if Governor Wise were a weaker man, John Brown's body would now be dangling from the limb of a tree. People would not wait for a trial. You have raised an uproar, and God alone knows where it will end."

"It will end in the emancipation of the slaves," Mr. Herrick replied. He had grown more calm, quieted as much by David's sternness as by the danger that threatened his friend. "If the South hangs John Brown, it is because we have driven the slave-power to desperation. They will do other desperate deeds, make desperate demands. That will be the end of their accursed insti-

tution. Listen to what I tell you, David. If John Brown is hanged —"

David rose. He had caught a glimpse of Annie Laurie's troubled face.

"Mr. Herrick," he said, "they have searched the Kennedy house and besides the arms intended to arm the slaves they found memoranda implicating Gerrit Smith, Dr. Howe, Mr. Stearns and other Massachusetts men, and a letter of yours. I would advise you to go to Canada, Mr. Herrick."

The next morning Mr. Herrick had left Washington. All during the trial David sat in that court-room at Charleston. Each day he saw John Brown brought in, weak and haggard, his eyes swollen from the wound in his head. He watched him as he lay day after day stretched on his cot, heard the harsh clank of his manacles when he tried to ease his weary old limbs, and he saw him struggle and rise when he indignantly ordered his counsel to withdraw the plea of insanity. On the fifth day of the trial, after a deliberation of less than an hour, the jury filed back into the court-room and the foreman stood to read the verdict.

"Guilty of treason, and conspiring and advising with slaves and others to rebel, and murder in the first degree."

When the sound of the foreman's voice died away there was absolute silence. All faces were turned towards the old Puritan, all eyes strained to read his heart. If he had any fear, any misgiving, he did not show it. Without a word he turned to adjust his pallet and composedly stretched himself upon it.

Two days later they brought him back to receive his sentence. When the judge asked if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him, he arose and answered:

"I deny everything but what I have all along admitted, a design on my part to free the slaves," he said. His manner was calm, and his voice so distinct that everybody in the room heard. "I never did intend murder or treason or the destruction of property, or to excite or incite slaves to rebellion, or to make insurrec-

tion. Now, if it is deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children and with the blood of millions in this slave country, I say, let it be done! I feel entirely satisfied with the treatment I have received on my trial. Considering all the circumstances it has been more generous than I expected; but I feel no consciousness of guilt."

Then the judge rose and pronounced that awful sentence:

"To be hanged by the neck, until dead."

From that hour until after the execution, Charleston was under martial law. Virginia was bordering on frenzy, the whole South was in a panic of fear. There were wild rumors of an extended slave insurrection as a prelude to rescue John Brown. The action of the North did not reassure the South. It had only sympathy for John Brown and taunts for the slave-owners. Churches held services of humiliation and prayer at the hour of the execution, funeral bells were tolled, minute guns fired, large meetings held to lament and glorify the martyr, Saint John the Just, and in both houses of the Massachusetts legislature a motion was made to adjourn.

Bright and clear rose the sun in Virginia on that December morning when John Brown was to die. Fears of a rescue had not passed and the jail was still guarded by cannon and several companies of infantry. Soldiers marched ahead of the old man who was seated on his coffin between the sheriff and two guards in a large wagon drawn by two white horses. They turned from the rough streets of Charleston to the country, where, on a level brown stubble-field with a view of the blue mountains, the scaffold had been built. Fifteen hundred troops were drawn up around the scaffold, howitzers commanded the field, a force of cavalry was posted as sentinels, with scouts and rangers on duty outside the enclosure. Citizens were not allowed to approach the field and strangers had been warned not to come to Charleston.

David watched John Brown leave the wagon, mount

he steep steps and take his stand on the platform with-
ut assistance and with no sign of timidity. Then the
heriff pinioned his arms, drew the white cap over his
yes and adjusted the noose around his neck.

" Everything is ready, Captain Brown," the sheriff
aid. " Would you like me to give you a private signal
efore the fatal moment? "

" It doesn't matter to me," the old Puritan answered,
ı a calm, distinct voice. " If only they do not keep me
oo long waiting."

But they did keep him waiting. For fully fifteen
ıinutes — the colonel in command was getting his
roops in position — he stood, blindfold, the noose about
is neck and his feet on that treacherous trap-door,
xpecting instantly the fatal drop. In all that time he
ave no sign of fear. He stood like an intrepid soldier in
osition, upright and motionless.

At last the colonel gave the order and the sheriff,
lescending the steps, with one quick blow of his hatchet
ut the rope and the trap-door fell.

There was an awful silence. A few struggles for breath,
rowing weaker and weaker, a twitching of the limbs, and
ohn Brown's body was still forever.

The good a man does is not always interred with his
ones. Who recalls the human frailties of the Cid or of
ir Philip Sydney? We remember only that one shared
is bed with an outcast leper, that the other, dying,
passed his cup of cold water to a wounded comrade.
hus it is that John Brown's soul goes marching on.

CHAPTER X

GAVE ME HER PROMISE TRUE

THE year 1860 began in an uproar. The State of Virginia was arming to the teeth, the members of both Houses — from the North as well as from the South — came to the Senate chamber and to the halls of Congress with pistols in their pockets and bowie-knives in their belts. The unspoken feeling of avoidance which had manifested itself the previous year in the social life of Washington had now become vehement antagonism. The Capitol rang with threats of disunion, and the threats were echoed throughout the country.

Instead of electing a Speaker and proceeding to business Congress spent two months wrangling over John Brown and a recently published book. Now, this second book to play a conspicuous part in the fusing of the Union could not be criticized as the work of an emotional woman. The author's name was Helper. He was a Southern man belonging to that grade called by the slaves of the wealthy planters "po' white trash" and by the planters themselves the "cracker-bonnet class," referring, of course, to the custom among the women of wearing peculiarly made sun-bonnets to match their homespun dresses. The book was called "The Impending Crisis of the South."

"Uncle Tom's Cabin" and John Brown attacked slavery from the standpoint of humanity. They cried out in burning indignation against the wrong done the slave as a man. "The Impending Crisis" attacked the institution from the economic point of view, declaring that only by its abolition would the South be able to keep abreast with the North and the West in social and material progress. It dealt with hard facts and proved by

figures which could not be gainsaid. The Southern members reviled it as rioting in rebellion, treason and insurrection, while the Northern members distributed it as campaign literature.

As the months passed the excitement increased, the breach widened, the North and South were pushed further and further apart. In February Abraham Lincoln, who two years before startled the statesmen in Washington by his audacity in meeting in debate Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, spoke, by invitation, to a brilliant, cultured audience in New York City. The next day the political outlook of the country had changed. The gaunt, homely figure of the rail-splitter from Illinois loomed large on the horizon, and far-seeing senators, looking at Seward, asked: "Which will be our next President?"

Even then the Democrats were falling apart. At the head of one faction in the Senate stood Stephen A. Douglas, short in figure but a giant in intellect. Facing him, as the leader of the second faction, was the tall form of Jefferson Davis. Over there, gathering in a far corner, was a third faction, dignified elderly gentlemen who in their younger days had voted with the old-line Whigs or been leaders among the Know Nothings. Too conservative to follow their young compatriots into the ranks of the new Republican party, they hoped to vote with the Democrats.

In April the Democratic Convention met. Democrats from the West, the North and the South wended their way with grave faces to Charleston. Every day they knelt in historic Saint Michael's praying God for guidance, that their deliberations might be harmonious, while at the same hour abolition preachers in the North were offering fervent supplications that the Charleston Convention might be disrupted.

Just as the two parties had faced each other in the Senate, the delegates in that convention stood. For one week their most eloquent men labored in vain; then came a prayerful Sunday. On Monday the supplications of the abolition preachers were answered. The delegates

from Alabama led, and one by one others followed, until eight States had seceded.

The great party of Jefferson and Jackson was disrupted. The seceding delegates not only demanded that slavery be admitted into the common territories, irrespective of Mason and Dixon's line, but that the United States government should protect it. What would Jefferson have said to such demands? How would Jackson have answered? If Jackson had sat in Buchanan's seat the children of the New South would never have had the joyousness of youth crushed out of their lives; they would never have known the misery of watching their parents, old before their time, go down to their graves in poverty and want.

One man saw the calamity that threatened his beloved country. The day after the adjournment of the Charleston Convention Mr. Stephens wrote to David:

"The party is split forever. The seceders intended from the beginning to rule or ruin. They were not strong enough to rule, so, to vent their jealous spleen, they disrupt the party. The only hope for agreement was at Charleston. If the party would be satisfied with the Cincinnati platform, which really gives them more than the Missouri Compromise, and would cordially nominate Douglas, we should carry the election; but that is impossible now. This time next year we shall be in the midst of war. The Union will certainly be disrupted."

The fight in the Charleston Convention was promptly returned to the floor of the Senate. Jack Clinton went with his father and watched the Constitutional Union party — the elderly gentlemen who had hoped to vote with the Democrats — nominate Mr. Bell of Tennessee and Mr. Everett of Massachusetts. And then — Ah, Jack! who would have believed it of you? Like other young men who belonged by inheritance to the old-line Whigs, you went to Chicago. From the North, the South, — not the cotton States — the East and the West they went crowding to Chicago. They swarmed over the city, packed the great wigwam and on the third ballot

of that convention Abraham Lincoln was unanimously proclaimed Republican candidate for President of the United States.

A month later David set out for the meeting in Baltimore, and the Charleston seceders came up from their adjourned meeting in Richmond to be joined by other seceders. If they thought to overawe the Union-loving Democrats they were mistaken. David watched Mr. Stephens' prophecy verified. Those who stood for the preservation of the Union and solved the slave problem by Squatter's Sovereignty nominated Douglas and Johnson, while, in another hall, the Fire-eaters, demanding extension of slavery or the dissolution of the Union, nominated Breckenridge and Lane.

The evening that he returned to Washington David went directly from the train to the Herrick cottage. Annie Laurie was waiting for him at the gate. As he drew her into his arms and smiled down into her upturned face, she asked:

"Do you think Mr. Stephens is right, David?"

"Yes, dear," he said, and his lips trembled. "There is no mistaking it. The Democratic party is hopelessly disrupted. Lincoln will be elected and we shall have war."

"But why need we have war if Lincoln is elected?"

David considered for a moment, trying to condense his answer into one sentence.

"Because the South will secede, and Mr. Lincoln, being both an able and an honest man, will keep his oath and uphold the Constitution."

"And you go south to-morrow?" she asked.

"No, sweetheart, to-night. You know I'm to stop in Augusta. Mr. Stephens will want the news of the convention and the sooner I begin work the sooner I shall have a home ready for my darling. It will be a long, long year for me, sweetheart," he said, and he stooped and kissed her, first her lips, then her eyes, and then her soft golden hair.

After supper, as he was following Annie Laurie to the front piazza, Mr. Herrick stopped him.

"You are convinced that the South will secede if Lincoln is elected?" he asked.

"I think there is very little doubt of it, sir," David answered.

"Well, you are not blind, you are not a fool, you must know that Lincoln will never let them go without a struggle, — they will be defeated." Mr. Herrick struck the table sharply with his fist, and David, looking at him in surprise, thought he had never seen him so deeply moved. "As sure as God is in the firmament, Lincoln will not allow this Union to perish. The South is mad to make the effort. We outnumber them three to one. We have an established government, a well-equipped army, a navy, and unlimited credit, while the South has nothing, absolutely nothing but her cotton and her slaves; and these fire-eaters — a flock of fighting-cocks — are determined to drag her to destruction."

"I'm afraid you are right, sir," David admitted unwillingly.

"Then why do you insist on entering a ship when you see that it is doomed? You already have a wide acquaintance — friends, powerful friends — both in the North and the West. Why do you return to Georgia? Mr. Sumner was speaking to me about you to-day. He said that if you — "

"Mr. Herrick!"

It seemed to David that the distance between him and his old teacher had suddenly become illimitable.

"Mr. Herrick," he said, and his words came slowly and with great distinctness, "you — might — as — well — ask — me — to — desecrate — my — mother's — grave."

"But, why? — why? Mr. Stephens has never belonged to this gang of fire-eaters. You do not believe in slavery."

"No, I do not believe in slavery in the abstract. But as for those people in the South, they are no more to blame for slavery than you are for the witch-hunting of New England. It was there when their grandfathers were born, and their great-grandfathers before them.

For generations their habits, their customs, their every thought, have been rooted in the institution. Slavery cannot be abolished in an instant. It would be worse than stealing a man's property. It would be burning an old man's home, destroying the associations, the accumulations of a lifetime and of his father's before him, throwing him a pauper on the world, with his helpless wife and children."

David paused, his face pale, his nostrils dilated. It was a spontaneous outburst, as great a surprise to him as to his two listeners. After a moment, he went on in his usual tone:

"If the North will devise any feasible scheme whereby the people of the South can be prepared for the new conditions brought on by the abolition of slavery, whereby the slaves can be fitted for the responsibilities of free citizens, I will gladly devote my life to the work. Mr. Sumner wants to be President. He poses as the champion of right and justice. Tell him that if he will find a cure for the curse he is so fond of declaiming against, just alike to the whites and to the blacks of the South, that he will be President, and the South will revere his name second only to that of Washington. You may tell Mr. Sumner that for me."

For a moment Mr. Herrick was silenced; then, with the invincible perseverance of a New Englander, he renewed the attack.

"But why will you go back to Georgia? You don't own a foot of land, you haven't a dollar's worth of property there. You will have a better chance in the North or the West. The madness of these fire-eaters threatens the whole South with disaster. You have no sympathy with them; you are against secession. You are — "

"No, I am not in sympathy with the fire-eaters," David answered. "I am against secession. But if Georgia goes out of the Union, I go with her. I was born there, I know no other home. My mother and my father sleep in her dust, and there, when my time comes, I hope to rest. If Georgia falls, I fall with her. I would rather live in a hut in Georgia, feeling that I had done

my duty as her son, than live in a palace in the North and know myself a renegade."

He crossed the room and bent down to Mrs. Herrick to tell her good-bye.

"You will take good care of Annie Laurie until I come back for her?" he asked.

Yes, dearie," she answered, and she put her arms around his neck and patted his cheek affectionately as she kissed him. "We will take good care of her, and you may be sure she won't be the only one to miss you. If you see Mrs. Marschalk while you are in Augusta, be sure to give her my love."

Out on the piazza, seated on the railing, Annie Laurie was waiting for him. If she felt any sorrow at having him go, she did not show it and only merriment lurked in the dimples about her mouth and in the corners of her eyes. David stood for an instant looking down at her.

"Annie Laurie," he said, "I'm afraid your father is right. We shall have war; the South will be defeated; then God only knows what will become of us. If — if —"

Annie Laurie slipped down from the railing.

"I dare you to say it," she cried, facing him in smiling defiance. "I dare you! I dare you! Say it! Say it!"

David gathered her into his arms. "I can't," he whispered, his lips against her ear. "I can't; I don't believe I should have the courage to face life without you."

When the time came for him to catch his train, she watched him walk down the ill-lighted street. At the corner he stopped and took off his hat, and she waved her handkerchief. When he passed out of sight, she turned and walked slowly up the steps. As she opened the door she heard him call her name. He was coming back.

"Why, David," she cried, running back to the gate to meet him, "what is it, dear?"

"My darling," he said, and he slipped his arm around her and, turning her face up to his, looked down into her eyes. "My darling, I want you to tell me again that you really love me."

"Why, David," she said, "why, David, don't you trust me? How could I help loving you? Ever since I first saw you, the night I sang for my supper, I have depended on you for everything. You have given me my education, my — "

"Hush," he said, "hush! What I have done was because I loved you, not to win your love. I would have done it, even had I been sure that you would grow up to love another. All my life I have had my cup of happiness knocked from my hand just as I raised it to my lips. First was my father's death, just as I was beginning to appreciate him and to look forward to the future. Then came my mother's second marriage. How happy I had been that day! Then my mother's death! It isn't that I don't trust you, sweetheart, but because I am so happy that I'm afraid I may lose you. I came back to look in your face to make sure that you really love me and will wait for me a year."

Annie Laurie slipped off one of her two rings, a slender gold band with one seed pearl.

"Mamma gave it to me when I was fifteen, and it is all I had until you gave me the other," she said, as she put it on his little finger. "Now I give it to you, to remind you that you have my promise." She faced him, resting her hands on his shoulders. "I will wait for you, David, one year, or fifty, or — "

"If war comes?" he asked.

Her arms slipped up around his neck and tightened.

"Then you must come to me before it begins," she answered. "You will fight! If anything happens — " her voice choked, — "I can come to you. I shall be a happier and more useful woman waiting as your wife. Do you promise to come for me before the war begins?"

"I promise," he said. "God help me to cherish you and to be the man you deserve."

CHAPTER XI

IN THE LAND OF COTTON

THE second day after David's arrival in Augusta, Tom, Mr. Decatur Fulton's body-servant, called on him at the City Hotel and presented a note with compliments from Mrs. Gordon Hazard.

"David dear," the note ran, "I am not asking you to play the tedious rôle of guest of honor, but that you will honor me and my dinner to-morrow, Thursday, at three o'clock. Decatur assures me that you promised to make no other engagement for that day, so I have invited a few of the many friends, who are anxious to see you, to share that pleasure with Gordon and me. I shall send the carriage early and hope you will be able to come out before the heat of the day." The signature was, "Ruth Fulton Hazard."

Mrs. Hazard's carriage was a loop calash drawn by a pair of thoroughbred dapple grays. Old Billy was on the dickey seat and at the sight of his smiling black face a lump rose in David's throat. It was during his first winter in Washington that Mrs. Beverly had told him of the death of Mrs. Greenwood, but seeing the old negro and hearing his deferential voice made it seem like yesterday.

At eleven o'clock they left the public road and turned into the wide avenue leading to Greenwood Hall. If ever a place deserved its name, that old house did. Besides the gardens and orchards and the negro quarters and the stables, beyond the wide sweep of spring-lot, there was no clearing, not a house in sight. It was surrounded by a wall of living green, live-oaks, hickories, magnolias, with now and then the broad umbrella of a giant pine.

Mr. Gordon Hazard and Decatur Fulton met David

half way down the long paved front walk, and there, on the piazza at the top of the steps — David could scarcely believe his eyes — stood Judge Courtney.

"Why, my lad," the old gentleman cried, giving David's hand a hearty shake. "The last time we met I patted you on the head. How tall are you now, sir?"

"Just six feet one in my stockings, Judge," David answered, laughing at his evident surprise.

"Two new friends to make your acquaintance, Mr. Hamilton."

David faced about to see the picture in the doorway, Miss Ruth with two toddling babies. One was as fair as a lily, with a mass of flaxen curls, the other was a veritable tar baby, and her little woolly pate was a tangle of freshly wrapped pigtails. Miss Ruth stood between them, one clinging to each hand, and over her shoulders, within the shadow of the hall, shone the smiling faces of Mammy Maria and Susan.

"Miss Sarah Twiggs Hazard, sir," said Miss Ruth, and the flaxen-haired baby held out her hands and put up her rosy lips.

David, not being one to resist such an offer, snatched her up in his arms and covered her face and head with kisses.

"When you have quite finished making love to my daughter, sir," — Miss Ruth was doing her best to look severe — "here is another friend who would like to pay her respects to you."

David glanced down at the little blackamoor, and she, catching his eye, grinned, ducked her head on one side and dropped him a courtesy.

"Goodness gracious alive, Miss Ruth!" exclaimed Susan, her face fairly radiating motherly pride, "you better gimme dat little black nigger. Fust thing you know, she'll be gittin' sech high-falutin' notions there won't be no livin' in de house wid 'er. Come here, you limb er Satan, you."

Miss Sarah Twiggs, seeing her little maid borne towards the back door, straightway began to kick and push away from David, demanding to be taken with her.

"Hamilton!" called Mr. Fulton from the foot of the steps, "I want you to meet my namesake, Decatur Fulton Hazard, the young gentleman who, at the tender age of eighteen months, caused a social war in Newport, Rhode Island."

There he was, the young lord of Greenwood Hall, stretching his fat legs and laboring up the tall steps, while his ebony cohort, to the number of six, stood on the paved walk below, rolling their white eyes at the strangers on the piazza and waiting for orders. He was a beautiful child with black eyes, black curling hair and a brilliant complexion. He greeted David without showing the slightest fear or timidity.

"It was Mammy Maria's love of bragging that caused the trouble in Newport," Miss Ruth explained. "She determined to have everything her own way and, when the white nurse-maids objected to being domineered over, Mammy informed them that Decatur, the master of twelve hundred slaves, was just seven hundred and twenty times more valuable than any other boy in Newport." Mrs. Hazard shrugged her pretty shoulders. "Of course the nurses reported to their mistresses and the result was not very pleasant. I shall not go north again until this war against slave-owners ends."

Other guests were arriving and David went out to the gate with Decatur and Gordon to help the ladies out of their carriages while the judge remained on the piazza and received with Miss Ruth. There were neighbors for fifteen miles around, an ex-Governor, and an ex-Senator, besides three ex-members of Congress, all slave-owners and large cotton planters.

The last to arrive was Judge Courtney's wife and she came in state as behooves a grand dame. Her coach was the most splendid in the county and besides the coachman and footman she was attended by two out-riders in livery, whose especial duty it was to open gates and stand at the heads of her horses as she stepped from her carriage.

"We are all anxious to hear what is going on in Wash-

ington, Mr. Hamilton," the ex-Senator said to David, when he returned to the house.

At once the talk was politics. The ladies were seated in the hall and the parlors while the gentlemen remained on the piazza. David had to give an account of all he had seen in Baltimore, of what he knew of Bell and of the way Lincoln was looked upon in Washington.

" Gentlemen, mark my words," the ex-Senator said, holding up his hand, " if Abraham Lincoln is elected the South will secede, and we shall have war."

" I don't agree with you." The judge's manner was more positive than usual. " The lawful election of a Republican President is no reason for the South to secede. Let the Free States commit the first overt act; we are the weaker and then the sympathy of all the civilized world will be with us. But let the South try to shatter this republic simply because a Presidential election goes against us, and the world will say we are getting too big for our breeches and need our punishment. No, sir, the South must wait for the North to strike the first blow."

" I can see the South waiting for the North to strike the first blow," and the senator laughed. " There won't be but one blow struck and the South will have to strike that. Who ever heard of a Northerner fighting? Look at the way Charles Sumner allowed Preston Brooks to cane him in the Senate; he didn't have even spunk enough to strike back. He's big enough. Why, gentlemen, Sumner is big enough to swallow Brooks whole. And see how Bissell sneaked out of fighting Jeff Davis —"

David had straightened up in his chair.

" Colonel Bissell was perfectly willing to fight, senator," he said. " It was Colonel Davis who retracted at the last instant; he withdrew his challenge. As for Mr. Sumner, — well, I saw that affair myself. Mr. Sumner had drawn his arm-chair close up to his desk and was writing when Mr. Brooks came in. Mr. Brooks did speak to him but he didn't give him time to rise. He must have struck him twenty blows on his head and shoulders with his gutta-percha walking-cane before Mr.

Sumner could get to his feet; he was pinned down by his desk and had to wrench it from its fastenings. He did strike back, sir," David added; and let it be remembered to his credit, for he liked Charles Sumner not one whit better than he liked Lloyd Garrison. " But he was blinded by blood, and reeled and fell to the floor."

" Then you think the North will fight, my boy?" asked the judge.

" I haven't a doubt of it, sir; they'll fight and fight to the last ditch."

" Well," said the congressman from Carolina, " while regarding this Union as cramping the South, I will nevertheless sustain it as long as I can. I firmly believe that the slave-holding South is now the controlling power of the world and that no other power would face us in hostility. Cotton, rice, tobacco and naval stores command the world; and we have sense enough to know it, and are sufficiently Teutonic to carry it out successfully. The North without us would be a motherless calf, bleating about, and would die of mange and starvation."

" Mahse Gordon," — Charles, the Greenwood butler, stood bowing in the door-way — " ol' Miss' clock is done struck twelve; must I sarve the watermillions for the gentlemen on plates, sah? "

" My God, tell him no, Gordon! " The Senator's feet came down from the top of the banisters and he sprang up, dusting the cigar ash from the front of his marseilles vest. " Plate indeed! it would take a turkey dish. I want a half, and a big half at that You'd better let us go out to the cutting-table, Gordon."

I hope you have eaten an Augusta watermelon. Not a rattlesnake, nor a sugar-loaf, but a genuine Augusta melon weighing from fifty to eighty pounds with a rind scarcely as thick as the blade of your carving knife! Not iced, but plucked, as Augusta melons always are, before sunrise, with the dew on them, and then put in the spring until wanted, or in the trough on the shady side of the well, or better still, in an open fireplace where a current of fresh air keeps them at just the right temperature!

Only the older ladies remained indoors. They took their seats on the back piazza, and melons, cut round, with a silver spoon sticking in the middle of each piece, were served to them on plates. The young ladies went with the gentlemen out into the shady back yard and took their stand about the long table, at one end of which Charles was cutting the melons, or, strolling about, seated themselves under the trees. They were each served with half a melon or with as many halves as the old butler could persuade them to try. Now Charles was a famous judge of melons. It was his invariable rule to thrust his knife deep into the heart of a watermelon, then, if it did not tear itself open, to return it to one of his train of little black servitors, who would straightway disappear with it behind the kitchen. What became of the melon after that, no one, unless it was that particular little black servitor, ever knew or cared. Stealing watermelons was an unheard of offence in the Old South. To take a melon from a neighbor's patch was no more theft than taking a handful of sand. Nobody ever bought watermelons, at least nobody but city folks, and certainly no slave of a cotton-planter ever considered such white trash.

At dinner Miss Ruth sat at the head of the great oval table, the place which David had seen only Mrs. Greenwood occupy, and Gordon at the foot with twenty odd guests between them. Charles and his three assistants were put to their best, passing the dishes delivered to them by the half-dozen young negroes, who, under the eyes of the cook, let no grass grow under their feet on their numerous trips between the kitchen and the back door. Martha and Mary, twin sisters of Susan, were stationed one on each side of the table with long brushes of peacock feathers to fan off an occasional fly, while Susan herself did a like service at the children's table, which was set on the back piazza and was under the care of Mammy Maria.

The first course was okra soup. While the great tureen was being removed, Miss Ruth asked:

"What do you hear of the Beverlys, David?"

"They are travelling on the Continent," David answered. "Twiggs graduated in June and wanted to come home, so he wrote, but his mother wants them to travel for two years, I believe."

"I understand that Twiggs was the handsomest young man at the last inaugural ball," Mrs. Courtney remarked.

"He was about the handsomest fellow in Washington, and Miss Margaret was one of the most beautiful girls," replied David. "They were very much admired, and I understand they are much admired abroad."

After the last course the ladies went up stairs to refresh themselves by a short nap or to remove their stays and make themselves comfortable while discussing the latest bit of gossip. The gentlemen found the coolest corner of the piazza, where they sipped juleps, smoked cigars and again began to talk politics.

"David," said the judge, "I want you to tell Alec Stephens that there is one thing, and only one thing, I blame him for — for not allowing the use of his name at the Charleston Convention. The Democratic party wouldn't have split if he had allowed us to put him in nomination. The seceders know that he will protect the constitutional rights of slavery and the Union men know that he will protect the Union. Yes, sir, Alec Stephens was the only man in the country that could have saved the party."

"Judge," — David's face was very serious — "the doctors told Mr. Stephens that if he didn't leave Congress and retire from public life, he wouldn't live two years."

"A creaking door hangs a long time, my boy," replied the judge. "It wouldn't surprise me if Alec lived to put both you and Decatur in your graves. He's the only man in the country who could have saved the party and prevented the election of a Black Republican."

"I doubt if the seceders would have voted for Stephens, judge," the ex-congressman from South Carolina said. "They used to be down on him in Congress; I'll never

forget the tongue-lashing Jefferson Davis gave him the session he was representative from Mississippi."

"Cobb once said something when speaking of Davis," the senator commented, and he cut his eyes slyly at the Carolinian. "I was asking about the Davis-Douglas debate in the Senate last spring; you know I was at home when it took place. Cobb said: 'Well, you see Davis is the second wife of Secession, Calhoun was the first. Like all second wives Davis is monstrous touchy in defense of his spouse.'"

Everybody laughed except the congressman from Carolina. A joke that brushed even the hem of Calhoun's sacred garments got no laugh from him.

"The second wife of Secession, eh? Well, Howell Cobb can name 'em all, I reckon," the judge chuckled and threw his feet up on the banisters. "I suppose you all know that Jefferson Davis narrowly missed being born in Richmond County. Yes, his father, Sam Davis, owned a small tract of land up on Rae's creek — got it from the State in payment for his services as a private soldier in the Revolution. I can remember distinctly when he sold out and started west. He had a covered wagon drawn by two dun-colored oxen. His wife and their small children rode in the wagon, and Sam and his two sons walked behind."

"Where were their negroes?" one of the gentlemen asked.

"Negroes?" the judge shook his head. "Sam Davis never owned a negro, not while he was in this county. They were plain, honest people of the cracker-bonnet class."

"That is one thing I can't understand," said Gordon, "why a man who has bought his slaves — didn't inherit them, I mean, so they can't have any great attachment for them — I can't understand why such men are always so violent in their defence of slavery. If Jeff Davis had been born a gentleman, had inherited his slaves from generations of —"

"My dear boy!" the judge interrupted a little impatiently, "it is because they have done without slaves

and know their real value. Look at Telly Tutwyler for instance, Massachusetts born and bred. A rabid abolitionist when he came here ten years ago! Now he has a negro trotting after him all the time. They tell me he has forgotten how to tie his own shoes."

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT COMMONER

THE first person to greet David the next day as he stepped from the train at Crawfordsville was Harry, Mr. Stephens' body-servant.

"Mahse Alec laid off t' come to meet you hisself, Mahse David," the negro told him. "He said so dis mornin', at de breakfus table, but Jedge Hinton came over from Washington Wilkes an' dey got t' wraslin' 'bout Mahse Bob Toombs. You know Mahse Bob Toombs done fell-out wid Mahse Alec, sah?"

"Fallen out with Mr. Stephens?" David stopped and stared. "Why, what on earth is the matter? They've been like brothers ever since they were young men."

"Yessah, but dat's al done broke up, now. Mahse Bob said ef Mr. Linkum is 'lected dis state's got t' git out de Union — an' 'fore Gawd he'll take 'er out! Mahse Alec said dat wouldn't be fair, de state ain't got no 'casion to leave de Union, an' she must stay. Dat made Mahse Bob rare. You know how he kin rare? Mahse Alec ain't said much but I noticed when he went to Washington Wilkes dis las' court week he stopped at de hotel, an' Mahse Bob ain't been t' Liberty Hall dis whole summer."

Thus it was given David to see the first fruits of the bitter struggle yet to come when a house would divide against itself, brother against brother and friend against friend.

As they entered the front gate at Liberty Hall a group of men were seated on the piazza smoking, while their wives and children could be seen roaming about the wide passage-way that extended through the house, or making themselves at home in the sitting-room. Evidently there would be company for dinner. Neither David nor the

negro made any comment, for neither could have remembered a meal in Liberty Hall when there had not been company, nor a night when at least one visitor had not slept under its roof. Everybody in Taliaferro County, in the State of Georgia, throughout the South, passing through Crawfordsville, felt at liberty to make Alec Stephens' house his home.

"I reckon you'll fine Mahse Alec in de liberry still a wraslin' wid Jedge Hinton, Mahse David," Harry said, so into the library David went.

After supper, when some of the visitors had gone home and the others had taken themselves upstairs for the night, Mr. Stephens and David had their first opportunity for a talk. Then it all came out. David told about the convention in Baltimore, and what was being said and done in Washington. Mr. Stephens described the political situation in Georgia and in the South. The State was as much divided as the Democratic party. The most influential paper in Savannah — the Southern stronghold of those dignified elderly gentlemen who had hoped to vote with the Democrats — was calling for votes for Bell and Everett and warning its readers against Black Republican rule. Toombs and the two Cobbs led the faction for Breckenridge, thundering against the fanatic Abraham Lincoln and demanding secession; Stephens, Ben Hill and Herschel V. Johnson, opposing them, struggled to heal the breach in the party and battled against the ever rising tide of disunion. All the while Stephen A. Douglas was going up and down through the South, in every town, village and cross-roads, and the burden of all his speeches was:

"The institution of slavery is not in danger. You have no good reason for secession. Stand by the Union."

The twelve o'clock train on the Georgia railroad came roaring and clanking into Crawfordsville, stopped in the little station, filled the village with smoke and the odor of burning pine wood, then went puffing and wheezing on its way to Atlanta. Still Mr. Stephens and David sat talking.

"One of the most dangerous features of this frenzy

for secession is the spirit of presumptuous boastfulness that seems to possess the people," said Mr. Stephens. "The fire-eaters and the newspapers have convinced them that as a people we are invincible and that the North is afraid to face us. It is not true; you know it is not true?" he appealed to David.

"Yes, but you might talk your tongue out and not convince them," David replied. Then he told of the boastful talk he had heard in Augusta and at Greenwood Hall.

The statesman sighed and sank back in his easy chair. There followed a long thoughtful silence; David was sitting on the steps in the full light of a brilliant moon, while Mr. Stephens' chair was under the shadow of the piazza. Presently he spoke.

"How does Annie Laurie feel?" he asked. "Is she willing to give up her abolition ideas and come back to a slave country?"

David looked up at him and smiled. They had been thinking of the same thing.

"She has promised to marry me next June," he answered, "and I have promised never to become a slave-owner. You know she has always been very fond of the South."

"I have had misgivings about advising you to settle in Georgia just at this juncture," said Mr. Stephens. "While I have looked forward to your return and want you with me, still, for you to begin life in the South now when you have the whole country to choose from may not prove judicious. You have powerful friends at the North and, under present conditions —"

"I could never feel at home in the North," David interrupted, rising and shaking down his wide trousers. "Certainly not under the present conditions."

He did not mention that he had refused a flattering offer from Mr. Sumner.

During that summer and autumn the fierce comet of secession, that long had been blazing upon the country, kept coming nearer and nearer. The alarm and consternation felt by the lovers of the Union in the South was

not shared by the same class in the North. They were as incredulous as those who had laughed at Noah when he preached the flood. The older men, who had watched the course of the fiery planet before, said it would pass its perihelion and fade rapidly out of sight. Mr. Stephens shook his head; he too had watched the comet before. Now he saw a different light, the bloody glare of war.

As the Presidential election approached, the South became more and more excited. The day came, that memorable sixth of November, and the people held their breath. That night few eyes were closed in sleep. People flocked to the cities, gentlemen and ladies, men and women, to get the earliest possible news. The next day brought it to them, — " the fatal result," they called it. Abraham Lincoln had been elected President of the United States. By this choice the North had spoken; the South was quick to reply. It came as with one voice, a mighty cheer for a Southern Confederacy. The people had been educated; the leaders were prepared.

South Carolina, whose education had begun earliest, was quickest to respond. Her legislature, after choosing her presidential electors, had remained in session awaiting results. When the news came they called a state convention and the people cheered and prepared for certain secession. In the other cotton states the papers, when announcing the returns from the election, called meetings of citizens to take action upon it.

In Savannah, birthplace and home of conservatism, the citizens of Chatham County packed a public square. They declared by resolution that the election of the fanatical Black Republican, Abraham Lincoln, ought not to be submitted to. They urged the governor to organize and arm the forces of the state, and the legislature to call a convention to consider the withdrawal of Georgia from the Union. Other counties of the state took similar action and the governor, Joe Brown, proceeded to obey orders and take immediate steps for the protection of Georgia.

One of his first steps was the purchase, in England, of two little gunboats, which he stationed at the mouth of

the Savannah River, ten thousand pairs of blankets, and ten thousand pairs of shoes. When the time came he got his price for them.

These were busy days for David. Never in the history of the South had there been such widespread and universal prosperity. Some three years before there had been a panic in the North, but the South did not feel it. For ten years the crops had been unprecedented; everybody had enough and to spare. David had stepped at once into a good law practice. The fact that he had Mr. Stephens to advise and direct him would alone have brought him a respectable business. In July he made a speech in Sparta and thereby won a reputation. People saw that he had both brains and eloquence and he had all the work he could do. The week after Lincoln's election he returned from the session of the circuit court at Appling and Mr. Stephens handed him an open letter.

David read it and smiled.

"So Joe Brown wants you to address the legislature on the subject of calling a secession convention, too, does he?" he remarked. "Then he can't be so rabid for secession as some people think."

"He's on the fence," Mr. Stephens replied. "He claims that he has nothing to do with it. He's a servant of the people of the State of Georgia and it's a question for them to settle."

"Of course you are going to speak," David said, but the quick searching glance that accompanied his remark rather belied the certainty expressed in his words.

"Yes, I had accepted the invitation from the legislature before receiving the governor's letter. I will speak, but South Carolina will secede — and the other cotton states will soon follow."

"We have a fighting chance for Georgia still," said David, "and even if we lose we'll let the world see that all Georgians are not fire-eaters and that some of them still stand for justice and moderation." His jaws came together with a snap and he squared his shoulders as when, fifteen years before, he sat on the steps of the

court house in Augusta and the crowd had attempted to hiss Alec Stephens.

"I hoped you would go with me," Mr. Stephens said pleased by the decision in David's manner.

"Trace-chains couldn't tie me away from Milledgeville on the fourteenth of November." David's eyes flashed and he grinned at the prospects of seeing the wind taken out the sails of a few particular fire-eaters — of letting them see that Alec Stephens was still alive and dared to oppose them.

That fourteenth day of November fell on a Wednesday. On Monday the younger Cobb had spoken. The elder brother, Howell Cobb, was in Washington, but doing his share to aid the cause of secession by helping James Buchanan empty the United States Treasury. Mr. Tom Cobb's speech was fiery. The picture of fanaticism he drew makes the blood run cold, even at this distant day. The danger was at every fireside in the south, clutching every white throat. It was a question of do or die. He opposed calling a convention and demanded that the Legislature should declare the state out of the Union without waiting to hear from every cross-roads and grocery. His listeners cheered and the tide of secession in Georgia rose perceptibly.

Tuesday night the Honorable Robert Toombs occupied the speaker's stand. He drew glowing pictures of Greece and Rome in the pride and pomp of their power, and told his listeners that their fall and present degradation were due to their cowardice in not defending their liberty. He too demanded secession and boldly declared that if the State of Georgia remained in the Union he would draw sword against her. The billows of secession rose mountain high. It was this angry sea that Stephens faced.

The old State House in Milledgeville, whose walls rang with that famous secession debate, had no bulging, pompous dome nor a broad sweep of steps leading up to a pillared portico. Its dignity lay in the beauty of its proportions and the grace of its simple outline. The Hall of Representatives was spacious, with high ceiling and broad galleries.

On that Wednesday, when Mr. Stephens and David arrived, the building was packed, — the Hall of Representatives, the adjoining rooms, the passage-ways, the windows, the doors, the steps, and even the grounds on which the windows opened. From every county in the state, from every cotton state and from many states in the North and the West, people had come to hear Georgia's greatest son.

It took all the strength in David's broad shoulders and long arms to force a way for him through the multitude. When at last he mounted the speakers' platform the crowd went wild. For five minutes the building shook with their shouts and their hand-clapping. Then a call was made for three cheers for Georgia's Great Commoner. They were given with a will, then again, and again, and again, and again —

It was fifteen years since David first saw him on the court house steps in Augusta. He was still the same fragile, boyish figure, a trifle older looking, a few pounds heavier. His year of retirement had improved his health, perhaps given him a new lease of life. He has often been compared to John Randolph. There were many points of resemblance between them, but consider the difference! Mr. Randolph had scarcely a friend. Mr. Stephens had hardly an enemy. His powers of satire, ridicule, sarcasm, and invective were fearful, but he never descended to abuse. Many a man had smarted or even withered under his irony, but none had cause to say he was not a gentleman. In this year 1860 he was the most trusted, the best-beloved man in the Union, north, east, south and west.

He is speaking —

" Fellow-Citizens, my object is not to stir up strife, but to allay it; not to appeal to your passions, but to your reason. Good government can never be built up or sustained by the impulse of passion. I wish to address myself to your good sense, your good judgment, and if, after hearing, you disagree, let us agree to disagree, and part as we meet, friends. We all have the same object, the same interest. Let us, therefore, reason together.

"The first question is, shall the people of the South secede from the Union in consequence of the election of Mr. Lincoln. My countrymen, I tell you frankly, candidly and earnestly, that I do not think they ought. To make a point of resistance to the government, to withdraw from it because a man has been constitutionally elected, puts us in the wrong. Whatever fate befalls this country, let it never be laid to the charge of the people of the South, and especially to the people of Georgia, that we were untrue to our national engagements. Let the fault and the wrong rest upon others. If all our hopes are to be blasted, if the Republic is to go down, let us be found at the last moment standing on the deck with the Constitution of the United States waving over our heads."

The applause came like a whirlwind. As one man the crowd rose to their feet, shouting forth their approval. Venerable ministers of the gospel, dignified statesmen and citizens vied with the ladies in their enthusiasm. Many of the strongest and sternest stood with tears running over their cheeks as they applauded.

David had seen many crowds applaud but nothing like this. And seated there on the speakers' platform, in sight of all the people, he buried his face in his hands and wept for joy.

At last the applause died away and Mr. Stephens went on.

He assured his listeners that even if Mr. Lincoln meditated wrong towards the South or its peculiar institution, having a Democratic Senate, his hands would be tied. The South must wait until he gave it some reason to disrupt the Union.

He took the speeches of the younger Cobb and of Mr. Toombs, and one by one he showed their fallacies. Greece and Rome lost their liberty from internal dissension. He favored the call of a convention of the people. Let the Legislature follow the legitimate object for which it was elected. They must not forget that the people, whether they dwelt in palaces or came from the cross-

roads and groceries, were the sovereign rulers of Georgia — the Legislature merely their servant.

His speech consumed two hours. A death-like stillness reigned over the great hall, broken only by the reverberating tones of his voice. The crowd sat as under a spell. Like Horace Greeley they forgot that they were listening to the most eloquent man in the South, they only knew that he was right.

When he took his seat his breach with Toombs was healed, the billows of secession had rolled back and he had won the battle. A convention of the people was called. For the first time in many a weary day the people of Georgia, with the load lifted from their hearts, went home to sleep.

CHAPTER XIII

CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 20TH, 1860

ON the 20th day of December, 1860, all eyes turned towards Charleston. For three days the sky had frowned and poured down rain. On this day the sun rose full and clear and it pleased men to say that Heaven smiled on the work to be done. David was there looking and listening.

It was the fourth day of the South Carolina Convention and the people of the city, of the state, of the Union, knew that the decisive step would be taken. At twelve o'clock the Convention met in Saint Andrew's Hall. Five of the delegates had been governors of the commonwealth and more than double that number had represented the State in the national Senate and House. There were judges of the Supreme Court and of the United States Court, wealthy planters, eminent ministers, leading lawyers, railroad presidents and influential business men. It was a notable body of men and their acts were dignified and in order.

The ordinance of secession was reported by Chancellor Inglis, Judge of Chancery. He was a silver-haired gentleman of the old school, a large planter and a slave-owner. His eyes flashed as he read in clarion tones: —

" We, the people of South Carolina, in convention assembled, do declare and ordain that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States under the name of ' The United States of America ' is hereby dissolved."

A vote was called.

" Yeas 169, — nays none," announced the clerk.

It was just a quarter past one o'clock.

The door-keeper was told. He gave the word to the

policeman nearest him. It was passed from mouth to mouth until it reached the sentinel at the tall iron gate of the entrance. He stepped up on a buttress and proclaimed the news to the impatient crowd that packed the street.

Cheer after cheer rent the air. The chimes of Saint Michael's pealed forth exultation and the bells of all the other churches joined with their brazen tongues. Old Secession, the gun by the post office, belched forth in thunder the glad tidings, the guns in the citadel echoed. Houses and shops were emptied, people trod on air. Young and old ran shouting through the city. When friend met friend they clasped hands and with tears in their eyes exclaimed:

"Thank God, they have taken her out at last!" or "Thank God, South Carolina has resumed her sovereign rights. I breathe free again."

New palmetto flags were thrown to the breeze. Every man wore a palmetto cockade in his hat, every woman a palmetto cockade on her bosom. Down the street they were unfurling a mighty banner. An arch was formed by fifteen blocks of stone — the fifteen Southern States — surmounted by a figure of Calhoun with the Constitution of the United States in his hand. At the base of this arch were other blocks of stone broken in fragments — the Northern States.

Again the people cheered, the church bells pealed, the cannons thundered, and up and down the streets, into the alleys, to the poorest cottages negro slaves ran back and forth with heavy baskets. The wealthy citizens of Charleston had opened their cellars and were distributing their choicest wine among their humbler neighbors. That day champagne flowed like water in Charleston and every man had wine with his dinner.

The signing of the ordinance of secession was to be a public ceremony. Busy preparations were begun. A committee of its most distinguished members was appointed by the convention to wait on the owner of the historic table on which Thomas Jefferson had drawn up the Declaration of Independence.

The committee called at a stately colonial mansion with heavy pillared colonnade, its wide mahogany door opening into a spacious hall. The lady received the distinguished committee in her drawing-room. She was in the habit of receiving distinguished visitors.

"Lend you my table!" said she, when the committee had stated their errand. "Lend you the table on which Thomas Jefferson drafted our immortal Declaration of Independence! I will burn it to ashes first! Thomas Jefferson founded our Union; you are trying to tear it down!"

The committee left and she returned to her children.

At half-past six that evening the convention again assembled at Saint Andrew's Hall. They formed in files of two and with locked arms marched silently through a cheering crowd, down the streets lighted by flaring bonfires, to Institute Hall, the largest assembly room in the city. For more than an hour every part of that hall, not reserved for the actors in the drama, had been packed. The galleries were filled by gaily dressed ladies. The floor was brilliant with the uniforms of officers of the new-born army. At length the cry came:

"The convention is coming! The convention is coming!" and the people rose to their feet with their attention riveted.

The President of the Convention, leaning on the arm of the clerk, entered by the rear door and took his seat on the rostrum. Following him came the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House in their robes of office, and the clerks of both bodies in their black silk gowns. The delegates of the convention, the senators, and the representatives entering by another door took the seats reserved for them in the body of the hall. A venerable clergyman, his hair as white as snow, his shoulders bent by the weight of years, advanced to the front of the rostrum. The people bowed their heads as, with uplifted hands, he prayed for the blessing of Almighty God on this act of his people.

Then the President of the Convention arose and unrolled the parchment with the great seal of the state

affixed. Solemnly and slowly he read from it the ordinance of secession. When the last word, "dissolved," dropped from his lips the building roared with the shouts and the cheers of the great assemblage. They shouted until they were hoarse and exhausted but the delegates sat grave and silent.

The President now asked the delegates to step forward and sign the ordinance. Their names were called by the clerk and one by one they advanced to the rostrum. When ex-Governor Gist's name was called, the gentlemen cheered and the ladies clapped their hands; he had been the official mouthpiece of the movement and had held the Legislature together awaiting results of the Presidential election. R. B. Rhett was also greeted with applause; he had been a disunionist since the palmy days when John C. Calhoun was in his prime. As delegate Spratt marched up to the rostrum the hall rang with cheers; he was noted for the vehemency with which he had advocated the re-opening of the African slave-trade.

When the last name had been signed to the parchment the President again arose. He lifted his hand and said:

"I now proclaim the State of South Carolina an independent commonwealth."

The enthusiasm of the crowd knew no bounds. Their hurrahs were taken up by the multitude in the streets. The clerk went out and mounting a chair held aloft the parchment with its signatures. The soldiers stopped marching, all voices were hushed. In breathless silence the people listened. When he had finished reading, they went mad with joy.

There was no thought of sleep in Charleston that night. A carnival was held around the liberty-pole at the head of Hayne Street. Pistols were shot off and fresh bonfires built. All night long the soldiers in their new uniforms marched and counter-marched, arousing joy and enthusiasm. Rich and poor, aristocrat and plebeian, blended their voices in hailing the birth of their new independence.

It was a fagged-out set of Georgia men who met at

the depot the next morning to take the early train for Augusta. Among them were Decatur Fulton, Gordon Hazard and Judge Courtney.

"Mark my word, my boy," the judge said, as he shook hands with David, "for every drop of wine, there'll be two drops of blood; for every bonfire there'll be a burning house. And you'll live to see it!" He turned to Fulton and Hazard: "I want you, young men, to understand that I came to Charleston on business. Had I known of this performance I should never have come a step. I understood that this convention of traitors intended to meet in Columbia."

"Why, haven't you heard?" Decatur Fulton asked. "There's smallpox in Columbia. The convention held its first day's meeting there in the Baptist church; then adjourned here, on account of the smallpox."

"Well, sir," replied the judge as he mopped his face with his handkerchief, "they'd better have stayed and caught the smallpox than give the whole country the hydrophobia. That's what it is, sir, hydrophobia. Bit by the mad dog of secession! I suppose you and Hazard are going to inoculate your own state?"

"We are going to do our part towards keeping Georgia from falling into the hands of Black Republicans," Decatur replied good-naturedly.

"You are, are you?" the old man retorted fiercely. "Well, if you were my sons I'd send you to the backwoods and keep you there until the country was rid of this epidemic of madness. That is what I have done with my boy. He's in Bryan County, looking after his wife's plantation."

David and Decatur exchanged amused glances, and Hazard stroked his mustache to conceal a smile.

"Just where you should be, sir," the Judge continued, turning on Hazard, — "in Bryan County looking after Ruth's interest. And you, Decatur! Colonel Twiggs and your grandmother would turn in their graves —"

The Judge stopped and caught his breath. David grinned, Hazard turned away, while Decatur laughed outright. A tall young man, a larger, younger picture

of the judge, had joined the group and stood calmly smiling down at his father.

"Well, sir, well, sir," the Judge demanded fiercely. "What does this mean? I thought you went to Bryan County to see to shipping that cotton, sir!"

"So I did, father," Mr. Henry Courtney replied. "It was nearly done when I left. The overseer's son seems a bright fellow, so I left him to finish it. Mother wrote me that you were coming here, so I came down to go home with you."

Though the Judge was not convinced, he said nothing. Instead, he walked across the track and took his son's arm.

When David bade them good-by in Augusta, the Judge said:

"Tell Alec that we are looking to him to save the state. He's the only man who can do it. Tell him I said so."

"Well, you tell Alec Stephens for me," Decatur Fulton called, "that the minute men of Augusta are laying for him. They say that he not only converted Joe Brown and the Legislature, but made Bob Toombs turn his coat. Tell Alec that the talk down here is that he's working for a place in Abe Lincoln's cabinet."

"Humph," said the Judge. "It would be the best selection Lincoln could make and would save Georgia from secession."

"I don't agree with you, Judge," Mr. Fulton spoke very seriously. "Howell Cobb is coming home, you know, and he is hot for secession. If the Legislature had listened to him they would have taken the state out without waiting to call a convention."

"Which shows how little regard he has for the rights of the people, sir. We beat you fire-eaters in the Legislature and we'll beat you in the convention if you don't trick the people, — if you don't trick the people, I say, sir!"

That was the last David heard, but as his train rolled out of the station he looked back and saw the four men still standing, talking. Before he reached Belair, they had separated never to meet again as friends.

CHAPTER XIV

IN THE ROOM OVER THE GATE

"Liberty Hall,
"Independent Republic of Georgia, North America.
"January 20th, 1860.

"MY dearest: I can never tell you how much I wished for you last night," David's letter to Annie Laurie began. "Not on my own account — that is the remarkable part of it — but for Mr. Stephens.

"But I may as well begin at the beginning. We have been defeated. The fire-eaters won the day. Yesterday Georgia, following the example of South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida and Alabama, seceded from the Union. So you see I am no longer a citizen of the United States of America — the thought gives me a strange, homesick feeling, in spite of myself. I am now a citizen of the Independent Republic of Georgia and God alone knows what I may be next month, after the Provisional Congress meets in Montgomery.

"It happened as Judge Courtney said it would. The fire-eaters tricked the people by a heresy. The younger Mr. Cobb, in his speech before the Georgia Convention, declared:

"'We can make better terms with the North out of the Union than we can if we remain in it.'

"That insidious heresy had the sound of reason and spread like wild-fire. The secessionists throughout the South adopted it as their war-cry, and it gained more votes than all the disunion speeches since the days of Calhoun.

"Mr. Stephens has said from the first that our fight against the secession movement was a forlorn hope but never once did he hesitate to lead it. His work in Wash-

ington and here in Georgia trying to heal the breach in the Democratic party was all as nothing compared with his efforts since. His last speech before the convention was a revelation. I didn't know he had it in him — I didn't know it was in any man. I had read of the eloquence of despair, but I never knew what it was until I heard him make that speech. It surpassed everything I have ever heard and anything that I could ever have imagined.

" He and Johnson had prepared and offered a substitute for the ordinance of secession; they wanted to gain time in the hope that the frenzy into which the people had been worked might pass. The substitute was lost, but no man present will forget Mr. Stephens' speech to his dying day. I can give you only a point or two in words, leaving you to imagine the nervous eloquence, inspired by despair, with which they were uttered.

" ' This step of secession once taken can never be recalled,' he began. ' Pause, I entreat you, and consider what reason you can give that will satisfy even yourselves in your calmer moments. What reason can you give to your fellow sufferers in the calamity that it will inevitably bring upon us? What reasons can you give to the nations of the earth to justify it? What right has the North assailed? What interest of the South has been invaded? I challenge an answer! '

" How I prayed that some fire-eater would attempt to answer his challenge! I knew Toombs would not but I hoped one of the Cobbs or Nisbit might. They were wise; they held their peace. Mr. Stephens continued:

" ' When we of the South demanded the slave-trade, did they not yield the right for twenty years? When we asked a three-fifths representation in Congress for our slaves, was it not granted? When we demanded the return of fugitive slaves, was it not incorporated in the Constitution and again strengthened by the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850? When we asked for more territory, that we might spread the institution of slavery, did they not yield us Louisiana, Florida and Texas? Again, gentlemen, what have we to gain by this proposed change in

our relations with the General Government? We have always had control. We have had a majority of the Presidents chosen from the South. We have had sixty years of Presidents to their twenty-four. We have had eighteen Judges of the Supreme Court to their eleven. We have had twenty-four Presidents of the Senate to their eleven. The South has had eighty-six Foreign Ministers to the North's fifty-four. We have had a vast majority of the higher officers of the Army and the Navy, while a large majority of the soldiers and the sailors have come from the North. Again look at another item, a fraction over three-fourths of the revenue collected for the support of the Government has uniformly been raised by the North. Now, I declare here what I have often said before, that this is the best and freest Government, the most equal in its rights, the most just in its decisions, the most lenient in its measures, and the most aspiring in its principles to elevate the race of men, that the sun of heaven ever shone upon. For you to attempt to overthrow such a government as this is the height of madness, folly and wickedness, to which I can never lend my sanction nor my vote.'

"Does it seem possible that after such an argument men — thinking men — could vote for secession? Yet they did. They didn't attempt to refute a single point; they knew they could not. Their only reply was: 'We can make better terms out of the Union than in it.'

"Then they voted Georgia out of the Union, beat us nearly three to one. Tom Cobb's heresy had done what all the disunion speeches of the fire-eaters had failed to do, defeated Alec Stephens and deluded the people of Georgia into voting for secession.

"Yes, Mr. Stephens signed the ordinance of secession and will henceforth work for its success as earnestly as he has heretofore worked for its defeat.

"I hear your exclamation of disapproval and see you shake your head. My dearest, that is just the point whereon the North and the South fail to understand each other. We, the people of the South, are citizens of our States, the Northern people are citizens of the Union.

" At Milledgeville there was no great rejoicing as in Charleston. On the contrary, as soon as it was evident that the ordinance would pass, the leaders of the movement became exceedingly solemn and quiet. This morning they remind me of a set of mischievous boys who, having set fire to a broom sedge, are frightened when it passes beyond their control.

" My dearest, last night — the night after Georgia seceded — Mr. Stephens spent in the room over the gate. Everybody was pretty well tired out and the few men who came to his room left early. I retired soon after and he was preparing for bed. It was after midnight that I was awakened. Did you ever awaken at night feeling thoroughly unhappy without any apparent reason? While I lay wondering what could have aroused me, I heard a sound — not a sigh nor a groan, but the very essence of anguish.

" I crept to Mr. Stephens' door. It was ajar and I pushed it open. The candle was spluttering in its socket. There he was on his knees. Oh, my dearest, never shall I forget the anguish of his upturned face, of the intertwined fingers of his poor, frail hands.

" He was praying for forgiveness for having deserted Georgia, having refused a re-election to Congress. He had seen the danger ahead but he had thought of his own comfort, had given up to his desire to spend his last days in peace, and so had shirked his duty to Georgia.

" It was then that I wished for you, dearest, wished for you as I never had before and as I trust I never may again. You would have known what to do, would have found some way to show your sympathy and comforted him. I did not. I love him and would have done anything on God's earth for him, but I didn't know how. It was bitter cold and I could only creep back to bed, feeling thoroughly miserable, and wish for you.

" At intervals I could catch a few words. He prayed that the country might be spared the horrors of war, besought the guidance of his Almighty Father, promising henceforth to devote his life to the services of his State.

It was always Georgia. Over and over again it was Georgia.

"I heard the town clock strike one, then two, then three. Then, my dearest, I did the only thing I could think of. Without a word I lifted him in my arms and put him in my warm bed. For a time I could feel him quivering; then gradually he became quiet and finally fell asleep and slept like a tired child.

"To-day he is more cheerful than I have seen him at any time since my return from Washington. He has not referred to last night and of course I never shall.

"There was a crowd of Augusta men on the train leaving Milledgeville with us this morning, among them Decatur Fulton and Mr. Hazard, most of them fire-eaters. Now that the secession of Georgia is an accomplished fact they have all become marvellously serious. Mr. Stephens noticed their sober faces and exerted himself to cheer them up, or at least, that is my belief.

"He told several amusing anecdotes about prominent men in Washington, and you should have seen the men on the train crowd around him, sitting on the arms and the backs of the benches and standing in the aisles.

"'What is that? What did Alec say?' they would whisper, nudging each other, and every once in a while those in the rear would call out: 'Speak up louder, Alec, we all want to hear.'

"They roared with laughter when he described the midnight row in Congress brought on by the dispute over referring the President's message on the Lecompton Constitution. I told you about that racket, when Keitt and Grow clinched and all the other members, rushing forward to restore peace, fell to fighting like so many Kilkenny cats without knowing whom they were striking or who was striking them. I wish you could have heard the men laugh when Mr. Stephens told how Washburn, making a grab at Barksdale's hair, snatched off his wig, and how Cordova of Pennsylvania caught up a heavy spittoon and flourishing it above his head threatened to brain anybody who came his way.

"The only man who didn't laugh was a Mr. Owens, an

old fellow from the mountains in the upper part of the state. He stood by, listening attentively, and when Mr. Stephens finished he shook his head.

" ' If that's the way them fellows in Congress cut up, when we send 'em to Washington and pay 'em big wages to make our laws,' he said, ' dang my skin if I can see why the country hasn't gone to the devil before this.'

" That set the crowd to laughing again, but Owens never cracked a smile. We left him arguing with Decatur Fulton. Owens thinks that as Georgia is out of the Union she had better keep to herself. He's violently opposed to a Southern Confederacy or having anything to do with South Carolina. Of course Decatur is red hot for a confederacy of the slave states.

" By the way, Mr. Fulton told me that the Beverlys are expected back in March. Twiggs has had his name enrolled as a member of Mr. Fulton's company of cavalry. I am wondering what Jack will do if war comes. You know he voted for Lincoln.

" When we reached Crawfordsville there was quite a large crowd to meet Mr. Stephens. Everybody had to shake hands with him and thank him for standing by the state. He told them it pleased him very much to know that they approved his course. One man sang out:

" ' Yes, Alec, it pleases you to have us approve your course, but you'd have acted just the same if you had known we didn't approve it. You do what you believe to be right, regardless of what folks think. That's the reason we love you and trust you, like we do.'

" The crowd sent up a great cheer at this little speech, which touched Mr. Stephens very deeply.

" As we were about to drive off the station agent came up to the carriage.

" ' I've just directed three visitors to Liberty Hall, Mr. Stephens,' he said. ' Two gentlemen and a boy.'

" ' Did they come together? ' Mr. Stephens asked.

" ' No, sir, only on the same train. The gentlemen are Northern men, I reckon. An' the boy — well, if I can tell corn shucks from pig iron, he was born in the State of Georgia and has never been far from home. He roamed

aroun' the village for a while, then he came over to where a party of us fellows were standin' in front of the hotel an' asks: "Whar's that man what edecates po' boys?" We all pointed up towards Liberty Hall an' before I could open my mouth to tell 'im that we were expectin' you on the next train, he had gone diggin' off up the hill. He hasn't come back. I reckon you'll find all three of them waitin' for you.'

"And so we did. The two gentlemen, Horace Greeley and Mr. Blair, were seated on the front piazza and the boy was roaming about the grove. Of course Mr. Stephens had to talk to the boy first; he would keep the Prince of Wales waiting in preference to a person who had appealed to him for charity. I took the two gentlemen into the library while he talked to the boy. When he finished, he turned the boy over to me.

"He is a green country youth of fourteen, a tall, lanky fellow, in homespun, home-made clothes and barefooted. I must have been just such a looking specimen when I first made my appearance at Liberty Hall. His father has a small farm and a large family near Dublin, and he wants an education. Some man advised him to come to Mr. Stephens. He helped gather his father's crop, then worked on a neighbor's farm and did odd jobs about the village to get money to pay his railroad fare to Crawfordsville. Unless I'm mistaken, he will begin school to-morrow.

"You are curious to know the reason for Mr. Greeley's and Mr. Blair's visit. So was I, very curious. They came to sound Mr. Stephens on the subject of taking a position in Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet. I can see your eyes open in surprise. I can hear you ask: 'Did he accept? What did he answer?'

"He said the only thing that Alec Stephens, being Alec Stephens, could answer: —

"'Gentlemen, Georgia has seceded from the United States. I am a citizen of Georgia.'"

CHAPTER XV

WHY STEPHENS WAS NOT PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERACY

"Montgomery, Ala.,
"Confederate States of America,
"February 9th, 1861.

"MY dearest: The fifth day of the Provincial Congress of the six seceding cotton states has passed — five of the busiest days and nights that I have ever known. Yesterday the Constitution for the provisional government was adopted. To-day, by a unanimous vote, Jefferson Davis was elected President and Alexander H. Stephens Vice-President. To-day a new nation, the Confederate States of America, takes its place among the nations of the earth.

"The sessions of this Congress are held in a large undecorated hall with ample galleries in the right wing of the capitol building of the State of Alabama. Many of the members you have seen in Washington. On the rostrum facing the door as you enter, and looking very familiar in that position, is Howell Cobb, elected President of the Congress on the first day. It is a very orderly and hard-working set of men.

"Montgomery is a typical Southern town and the least attractive that I have ever seen. Of course it is full to overflowing. Besides the members of Congress and the crowd of visitors attracted by curiosity, there are a swarm of politicians, speculators, contractors and negro-traders, all hunting jobs under the new government. No, I do the last named gentlemen injustice. They are here for the sole purpose of disposing of their stock of human chattels. Every day they not only hold slave-

auctions in every slave-pen in the town but at various public places and on the street corners. Yesterday and to-day Trowbridge of Hamburgh, South Carolina, auctioned off large gangs by the fountain before the capitol. This morning, as we were driving up in company with Mr. Cobb, he proposed that we stop and see how negroes were selling.

"'How is business, Trowbridge?' Mr. Cobb asked.

"'Brisk, governor, brisker than I have ever known it,' replied the negro trader, coming over to the carriage. 'Secession has done great things for the slave-trade, and there's no mistake about it. Why, as long as we were tacked to the old Union, men used to be afraid to put their money in niggers — didn't know but any minute the Yankees might pass a law and make 'em free. I understand you gentlemen are bringing out slavery pretty strong in our new Constitution and instead of its being wrong to own niggers it'll be wrong if you don't. I hope the report is true?' He looked at Mr. Stephens anxiously. I have never seen a man whose eyes didn't instinctively turn to Mr. Stephens when he wanted a straight answer.

"This man certainly got as straight an answer as any one could have wished. Mr. Stephens replied:

"'Slavery is the rock on which the Union split. It is the rock on which the Confederacy is founded. It is the very corner-stone of our Constitution.'

"'Well, that'll please all the men in my line of business,' Trowbridge said, and he looked his pleasure. As we drove off he called after us: 'When the free states come to their senses and want to join us, I hope you won't take 'em in, they've given us too much trouble already.'

"'That's an argument for you, Cobb,' said Mr. Stephens. 'By refusing free territory we please the negro-traders, while to the rest of the civilized world, if negro-traders can be enumerated among the civilized, we shall be known as the Black Republic and execrated accordingly.' He smiled and folded his hands on the top of his cane with the same expression on his face that he wore

last night when he told Mr. Toombs he would never strike the first blow at the Union.

"That, my dearest, is the reason Alexander H. Stephens was not elected President of the Confederate States of America, instead of Jefferson Davis. He refused to strike the first blow — to begin the war.

"The subject was broached to him on the way to Montgomery. Mr. Toombs took the train with us at Crawfordsville, and we found Mr. Chestnut of South Carolina aboard. He came over and took the seat in front of Mr. Stephens. Mr. Toombs was in the seat behind.

"'Mr. Stephens,' said Chestnut, 'the delegation from my State have been conferring and have decided to look to Georgia for the President.'

"'Well, sir,' Mr. Stephens replied, 'we have Mr. Toombs, Mr. Cobb, Governor Jenkins, and Governor Johnson. Either will suit. I will give my vote to either of them.'

"'We are looking only to you and Mr. Toombs, Mr. Stephens.' Mr. Chestnut's manner was positive. 'No other names were mentioned, and the majority of the delegation favor you.'

"'No, that can never be; that can never be,' Mr. Stephens replied, his face growing a little pale.

"'What is it, Alec?' Mr. Toombs asked, leaning over the back of our seat.

"'Come over here,' Mr. Stephens told him.

"I started to get up to give Mr. Toombs my seat, but Mr. Stephens put his hand on my knee, and Mr. Toombs took the place beside Mr. Chestnut, who repeated the proposition, candidly saying that a majority of the South Carolina delegation favored Mr. Stephens.

"'That settles it, Alec,' said Mr. Toombs. 'You are the choice of the Georgia delegation — we have talked it over — so you must let us present your name to the convention.'

"'No,' repeated Mr. Stephens. 'No, I have opposed secession. I cannot take office under the government.'

"'Alec —' began Mr. Toombs, but Mr. Stephens

would not let him speak, so he laughed and changed the subject.

" We hadn't been an hour in Montgomery when Willy P. Harris and Colonel A. M. Campbell called. Harris was the first spokesman and he went straight to the point.

" ' The Mississippi delegation prefer you for president, Mr. Stephens,' said he, ' and we have come to ask if you will allow us to present your name? '

" Mr. Stephens moved restlessly in his chair. He was very much fatigued, and I think he felt a little irritated.

" ' Gentlemen, I opposed the movement of secession. You must eliminate my name as a candidate for all offices under this government. It would be bad policy to present my name.'

" Colonel Campbell bent forward, listening to Mr. Stephens earnestly. The instant the last word fell from Stephens' tongue Campbell spoke.

" ' You are mistaken, sir! It would be the very best policy, sir. You opposed secession. The whole country, North and South, the whole world knows your reasons. You are the only man who can take away from this movement the character of rebellion.'

" Mr. Stephens had recovered from his irritation. He was more willing to argue the point.

" ' I think you do the Unionists injustice, Colonel Campbell,' he replied. ' While they earnestly opposed the movement, when the ordinance of secession was passed they bowed to the will of the majority. I speak only of my own state. I am told that the Union feeling was not so strong in Mississippi. Conditions are doubtless different with you.'

" ' No, about the same. The Union feeling is just as strong, though their votes are not nearly as numerous as when they elected Henry S. Foote and defeated Jefferson Davis for governor. They have acted in Mississippi just about as they did in Georgia. They declared their *willingness* to sustain and defend — but for success in this movement we must have the enthusiastic support of the Unionists in the Southern States.'

" After arguing for two hours they got him to the point of saying he would consider, and then, wisely withdrew. The next day Judge Chilton and Colin McRea of the Alabama delegation called for the same purpose. Their shadows had hardly left our door when Mr. Keitt of South Carolina and Mr. Toombs made their appearance — at least, Mr. Toombs didn't make his appearance, he sat out in the passageway and when I let Keitt in Toombs put his finger to his lips and shook his head.

" Well, Keitt talked and talked, and talked — you know how Keitt can talk.

" ' You are the preference of the South Carolina delegation for President, Mr. Stephens, and I am sent to ask if you will serve if elected,' was what it all amounted to.

" Mr. Stephens listened thoughtfully to all he had to say. When Keitt stopped, waiting for his reply, there was a moment's silence. I don't believe I ever was so anxious in my life; I knew what Mr. Stephens' inclination was, and I had heard his prayer the night after the secession of Georgia.

" ' If I am the unanimous choice of the delegates as well as of the States, and can organize a Cabinet with such concert of ideas and ability as will justify a hope of success, I will take it,' said he. ' But only on those conditions.'

" Mr. Keitt left satisfied and Mr. Toombs was jubilant. When I returned to the room Mr. Stephens was smoking.

" The two days that followed are not pleasant to look back on. There were a great many politicians besides the accredited delegates of the six seceded states who had to be consulted, from Virginia, from Maryland, from North Carolina, Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, and Arkansas. All represented the radical secessionists of their states and were rabid for war.

" Last night in walked Toombs and Keitt, followed by Judge Chilton, Willy Harris, General Sparrow and Henry Marshall of Louisiana, Morton and Owens of Florida, and the whole Georgia delegation. Toombs was the spokesman and I never saw him in a better humor or looking as handsome.

" ' Alec,' he said, ' you are the choice of every man in Congress, and all of us are ready to pledge ourselves to help you form a cabinet. There is only one point. Those fellows from Virginia and the border States want you to promise to strike the first blow.'

" For a moment there was dead silence. I believe every man in the room held his breath. Mr. Stephens said nothing, Mr. Toombs continued: ' They say that their states are hanging in the balance, ready to turn with the first blow. They believe Lincoln will be as cowardly as Buchanan. Now they want the question settled and they want you to promise that when an opportunity offers, say if the administration should attempt to reinforce or provision Sumter, you will strike the first blow.'

" For about two heart-beats they faced each other, that magnificent specimen of manhood and that fragile, emaciated little man.

" ' No, I will never strike the first blow at the Union,' said Mr. Stephens, speaking slowly and distinctly.

" ' Alec! ' cried Mr. Toombs.

" They gazed into each other's eyes. Then, without a word, Toombs turned and walked out of the room with the other delegates at his heels.

" I understand that many of the delegates sat up all night caucusing, and that Mr. Toombs was the second choice with the members of congress, but, that the delegates from the undecided states did not consider him radical enough, thinking he would make Mr. Stephens his premier and be guided by his advice. Cobb and Rhett's names were both considered but the radicals would not accept either. After further skirmishing Davis's name was presented and the radicals made no objections. For the sake of harmony the other delegates fell into line and this morning the Honorable Jefferson Davis was unanimously elected President of the Confederate States of America."

CHAPTER XVI

THE WELDER OF THE NATION

THE most momentous March 4th in the history of our country dawned beautifully clear. More than a week before, the telegraph wires had flashed the news of the unexpected arrival in Washington of the President-elect, Abraham Lincoln. People stared and asked, Why? Later there were whispers that he had escaped a plot to assassinate him in Baltimore. The majority scoffed and scornfully declared that the new President was a greater coward than Buchanan or Pierce.

Mr. Herrick was not among the scoffers. Early in the year he had a private interview with General Scott. A week later he made his second appearance at the modest lodgings of the chief of the American army. Colonel Stone, the young army officer to whom General Scott had entrusted the organization of the militia for the defence of Washington, was sent for. The next day Mr. Herrick took his place in the War Department as an employee of the United States Government.

In a short time he became surprisingly popular with his fellow employees, especially with the young clerks who were members of the militia. It soon developed that Mr. Herrick, though not able to bear arms, was particularly fond of the military and particularly fond of the South. Naturally he attracted men with tastes similar to his own. They invited him to little dinners, or to their lodgings to meet a few friends. By a strange coincidence, on the day following these little gatherings, the genial gentlemen concerned always found on their desks neat little slips informing them that their services were no longer needed by the government or, in some instances,

that their presence could be dispensed with in the national Capital. Most of them went south.

Their places were promptly filled by tall, muscular men from the West who knew how to hold their tongues as well as how to handle a gun, or by pale-faced New Englanders with quiet, reserved manners. In such an uncongenial atmosphere Mr. Herrick soon grew lonely. He asked to be transferred and a berth was found for him in the Treasury. From the Treasury he went to the State Department only to move to the Navy Department, and then to the Post Office. In each Department the same conditions prevailed. The genial friends who received Mr. Herrick with open arms were soon bidding him good-by.

"It's a mighty good thing," they would say to him, as they packed up their few belongings at their desks, "it's a mighty good thing, in times like these when nobody knows what's going to happen, to be a veteran of the Mexican War and a favorite of old Fuss and Feathers."

To all such remarks Mr. Herrick shook his head sympathetically, and while acknowledging the friendship of his old commander, was careful to mention the fact that one never ceased to regret an amputated limb even though it was lost in defence of his country.

It was immediately after his installation at a desk in the Post Office Department that his visits to General Scott became regular nightly occurrences. On February 21st, he called in the afternoon and was promptly received. General Scott again felt called upon to send an orderly for Colonel Stone. It was good dusk when the young army officer and Mr. Herrick rang the bell at Senator William H. Seward's house on Lafayette Square. A short time after their departure young Mr. Seward set out for Philadelphia to find Mr. Lincoln.

At day-break February 23rd, Mr. Lincoln, accompanied by only one of the large party of friends who were escorting him from Springfield, arrived in Washington; he had passed through Baltimore twelve hours earlier

than expected. Mr. Herrick was not among those who sneered at his cowardice.

On March 4th the inmates of the Herrick cottage were early astir. For the first time Mr. Herrick was to see a President of the United States inducted into office. At the inauguration of Mr. Pierce and of Mr. Buchanan he had sternly refused to leave the house, but now it was barely daylight when he began to hurry his wife and Annie Laurie for fear of being late. They were about to leave the house when a cavalryman, one of General Scott's orderlies, made his appearance.

Mr. Herrick rushed out. On his return he was smiling and he handed Annie Laurie the sheet of paper which he had received from the orderly.

"Why," she exclaimed, glancing it over, "General Scott has reserved a place for you on the inaugural stand and wishes you to report at the White House for duty immediately after the ceremonies."

"Yes," assented Mr. Herrick, with a touch of pompousness, "I told the General yesterday that the Post Office didn't exactly suit me and he intimated that Mr. Lincoln might wish a man of my attainments for his special messenger."

Annie Laurie exchanged glances with Mrs. Herrick. They had received no explanation for Mr. Herrick's sudden influence with the Government, but fancying that it was all due to the good offices of his abolition friends, after the manner of women, they had felt duly grateful and held their peace.

As they left the cottage they were treated to another surprise. Mr. Twiggs Beverly walked in the gate.

"Why, why," exclaimed Mr. Herrick as he shook his former pupil cordially by the hand. "We didn't expect to see you in Washington. Come to see Mr. Lincoln inaugurated, I guess?"

Mrs. Herrick made no such mistake, for she saw Twiggs' eyes fastened on Annie Laurie and needed no further explanation. The good woman admired David, loved him sincerely, but somehow she could not stifle the feeling of regret that rose in her heart when she remem-

bered that Annie Laurie had promised to marry him. It was a great thing to live in the Beverlys' grand mansion, be served by three hundred slaves and be able to go to Europe, to the ends of the earth, whenever you wished. She smiled sadly as she shook the young man's hand and told him she was glad to see him.

As they walked up Pennsylvania Avenue it seemed as if a large part of the population of the Union must be going with them, all wending their way to the east front of the Capitol. The stars and stripes were floating from every flag-staff. Soldiers were to be seen at every step. It was quite evident that General Scott and the Washington police were ready for any emergency.

It was a little past noon when President Buchanan called on the President-elect at Willard's Hotel and conducted him to the carriage, in which, side by side, they rode to the Capitol. A company of sappers and miners marched in front of the presidential carriage, a squadron of the District of Columbia cavalry surrounded it in double files, while following it came the infantry and riflemen of Washington. Squads of riflemen were placed on the roofs of commanding buildings along Pennsylvania Avenue with orders to watch the windows opposite and fire upon them in case any attempt was made to fire from the windows at the presidential carriage. Every street that crossed the avenue was guarded by squads of regular cavalrymen, a battalion of District of Columbia troops was stationed near the steps of the capitol, and riflemen in the windows of both wings, while on the brow of the hill, not far from the north entrance of the Capitol, commanding both the approach and the broad plateau of the east front, was stationed a battery of flying artillery, with General Scott himself in command.

A profound silence fell over the great crowd assembled around the east front of the Capitol when the Marshal of the District of Columbia made his appearance in the door. He was followed by the Judges of the Supreme Court with the venerable Chief Justice Taney at their head, then the Sergeant-at-arms, the Senate Committee,

the President of the United States and the President-elect.

Other dignitaries followed but the crowd did not see them, neither did they hear the speech of introduction made by the distinguished senator from Oregon. They had eyes and ears for but one, the man elected to be their next President.

There he stood before them, a tall, lank man, considerably over six feet in height, with stooping shoulders, long pendulous arms, terminating in hands of extraordinary dimensions. He was dressed in an ill-fitting wrinkled suit of black, reminding one of the clothes of an undertaker. Around his neck a rope of black silk was knotted in a large bulb, with flying ends. His turned-down shirt-collar disclosed a sinewy yellow neck, above which, surrounded by a mass of bristling black beard and hair, rose a wrinkled, mask-like face. Such was Abraham Lincoln, the man who in the infinite mercy of God was destined to weld from the fused States of the Union, our Nation.

When he stepped to the front of the platform the welcome was not hearty. His enemies were too numerous and his friends feared to exasperate them. For a moment he stood awkwardly uncertain, looking for a place to deposit his gold-headed cane and his tall black hat. The cane went under the table but the new hat seemed too good for the rough boards. Then Stephen A. Douglas stepped forward and took the embarrassing article.

Never was an inaugural listened to with such profound attention. The country seemed on the brink of destruction, the South was in open rebellion, it appeared impossible to arouse the North from the lethargy into which it had fallen, the army — all that had not been turned over to the rebellious states — was in distant parts of the country, while the navy was scattered to the four corners of the earth. Thinking men all over the country, over the world, were asking:

"What will be Mr. Lincoln's policy? What will he say?"

When the last sentence ended and the few cheers died

away, a brooding silence fell like a pall over the crowd, then it crept over the city, and out over the whole country.

With an unconscious sigh Twiggs turned and looked down at Annie Laurie. Tears were running over her face.

"Why, honey darling," he cried, in alarm, "what is it? What has disturbed you?"

"Oh, Twiggs, I am so glad we are not to have war."

"Not to have war?" He stared at her in astonishment. "Why, that is exactly what he has said we would have."

"Oh, no, you misunderstood him," Annie Laurie replied. "In the first part of his speech he said, 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.' Again at the end he said, 'In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourself the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government; while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend" it.' Surely that means that he will not fight the South?"

Annie Laurie looked at Twiggs as though the fate of the nation depended on his reply. Perhaps she was not wrong. As he interpreted that speech, so would other men in the South.

"Yes, but there is one point you failed to grasp," Twiggs told her. "Lincoln said, 'The power confided in me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government.' That means *war*. The South will never give up what it has already gained, and — unless I am very much mistaken — it will soon proceed to take more. Jeff Davis is no coward. *He* is not afraid to fight."

"David wrote me that that was the reason he was elected. He promised to strike the first blow when Mr. Stephens would not. David said —"

"Has David been in Montgomery?" Twiggs interrupted.

"Oh, yes, from the very first. He was in Charleston when they signed the ordinance of secession and was present when Georgia seceded."

"God!" Twiggs exclaimed under his breath. "How I wish I could have been there! What he has accomplished — been admitted to the Georgia Bar, secured a good practice, and taken a hand in founding the Southern Confederacy — while I —" his tone expressed supreme contempt — "have been dawdling my time away with European travel and studying music. Does David know Mr. Lincoln?" he asked, speaking a little sharply. "What does he think of him?"

"No, but Mr. Stephens thinks he is a very able man and will do his duty."

"Well, Alec and I may not have the same ideas of Lincoln's duty just now, but he's a good judge of men. I'm glad to have seen Mr. Lincoln. He's no beauty but he has a strong face and maybe he isn't all bad."

"Oh, he is good," Annie Laurie exclaimed with enthusiasm. "Everybody says he is good, — they call him 'honest old Abe,' and —"

Twiggs smiled down at her.

"Evidently you have not been reading the Southern newspapers and not many of the Northern ones. I have never known a man so lampooned and abused. But I'm inclined to think he will prove a decent sort of a fellow, though it's hard to judge a Yankee." Twiggs shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

It was dusk when Mr. Herrick returned home. Twiggs and Annie Laurie were sitting in one corner of the front piazza.

"This is my most valued possession," Mr. Herrick said, drawing a folded paper from his pocket. "Mark my word, the day will come when it will be worth as many gold dollars as it will take to cover it."

"What is it?" Twiggs asked with no enthusiasm.

"The first paper signed by Abraham Lincoln, as

President of the United States, my commission as his special messenger."

Twiggs showed no interest but Annie Laurie uttered an exclamation of delight. She sprang up and taking the paper from Mr. Herrick ran into the house and holding it under the candle read it aloud.

"Oh, papa," she cried, "what a plain honest hand he writes. It reminds me of David's. President Lincoln's life reminds me of David. He has worked his own way up, and he has been so good and kind to everybody. You must give me this for a wedding present. I would rather have it than anything else in the world."

She threw her arms around his neck and kissed him impulsively.

"I was afraid you had forgotten David," he said, patting her cheek affectionately.

She looked at him puzzled for an instant, then, understanding him, her face grew serious.

"No," she replied, "I could never be so ungrateful, I could never forget David."

When she went back to the piazza Twiggs took her hand.

"My darling," he said, "I am waiting for your answer. When will you be ready to go south with me?"

"I can't go south." She drew away her hand shivering.

"Laurie," he cried. "Laurie, you are not going to let this trouble separate us. It shall not separate us! I have waited all these years. I will sell every negro I possess — give them away — do anything you wish —"

"It is not that. It is — my promise to David." And she put her hands up and covered her face.

"Your promise to David! What prom— ?"

"I promised to marry David," she replied, and she began to sob softly.

Twiggs turned his face towards the street.

"So he has accomplished that too — won the girl who was to have been my wife — the boy they used to say was not my equal. My equal!" He laughed mirthlessly. "No, he is not my equal for he has passed miles ahead,

while I frittered away my life." Then he turned back to Annie Laurie, and laid his hand timidly on her arm. "Please don't cry," he begged. "It would break my heart to know that I had made you unhappy. Since it is not to be I, I thank God that it is as noble a man as David Hamilton."

CHAPTER XVII

THE POWDER THAT FIRED THE FIRST GUN

THE night after Lincoln's inauguration David wrote Annie Laurie from Montgomery.

" My dearest: This has been an eventful day with us as well as with you. While you were listening to Mr. Lincoln's inaugural address we were raising our national flag over the capitol. We call it the stars and bars. It has three broad stripes — the one in the centre white, the others red, with a blue union, containing seven white stars. The seventh is Texas — she joined just in time to get her star on the flag.

" Another important event is that to-day I received orders to report for duty to General Beauregard at Charleston. I shall leave to-morrow. To tell the truth I am quite willing for the war now. The dispute between the North and the South can be settled in no other way. The sooner it comes the sooner it will be over, and we can both go to work under our new conditions.

" Buchanan's attempt to disgrace General Twiggs by ordering him dismissed from the army is but fresh evidence that the two sections do not — and I believe cannot — understand each other. Any fair-minded Southern man would have acted just as Twiggs has done in turning over the military posts in Texas to the State authorities, yet see how the North howls. It's a question of States' Rights. A Northerner can't understand the feelings of a Southerner towards his state.

" Of course every Georgian is fighting mad about it. I agree with an old lady who is stopping at this hotel. When she heard of Buchanan's order she said:

" ' I think it has come to a pretty pass, when one of General John Twiggs' sons is expected to take up arms

against Georgia. Traitor and coward, indeed! If David Twiggs is a coward why did the Congress of the United States give him a sword for bravery and gallantry during the Mexican war? If he's a traitor, why doesn't he remain in the service of the United States and fight against Georgia? I shall write to General Twiggs asking him to return the sword presented him by the United States, and get all my friends to sign the letter. He has two other swords — one presented by the State of Georgia, another presented by Richmond County for his services in Mexico. Georgia knows how to appreciate her sons. Traitor indeed! James Buchanan had better get on his knees and pray his God that his record in the service of his country may be half as good as that of David Twiggs.'

"I signed the old lady's letter though I don't think the approval of the South will have any more effect on the General than the disapproval of the North. You know he has never had the training of West Point to discipline him into blind obedience. Like all who have Twiggs blood in their veins he does what he believes to be right and lets the world think what it pleases.

"Unless I'm mistaken, the present Governor of Georgia is cut after the same pattern. One of the first matters considered by Mr. Davis as President of the Confederate States of America was the situation in the Charleston harbor, Fort Sumter, and it was finally decided that the first blow should be struck there. Mr. Walker, the Secretary of War, was instructed to send General Beauregard a telegram ordering him under certain contingencies to bombard Fort Sumter. Beauregard's reply was a telegram, short, if not sweet, —

"'Where is your shot? Where is your powder?'

"When Secretary Walker received this reply to his telegram he became so wrought up that he swallowed his quid. It didn't make him sick, he was too excited for that. Down the hall of the State Department he rushed to the President's office, flourishing his slip of yellow paper.

"The President was worried. Having been a soldier he knew that both items mentioned in Beauregard's

telegram were necessary for a bombardment. A cabinet meeting was called and Bob Toombs stated that Joe Brown, immediately after the election of Lincoln, had taken steps to defend the State of Georgia by the purchase of munitions of war in England. As Georgia had since become a member of the Confederacy Governor Brown might be willing to turn the munitions of war over to the general government. A telegram was sent and the next morning Joe Brown's answer came:

" ' The Governor of Georgia will turn over to the government of the Confederate States of America the desired munitions of war, provided the said government will take the other supplies purchased for the same purpose — ten thousand pairs of shoes, ten thousand pairs of blankets, and two little gun-boats now stationed at the mouth of the Savannah River — reimbursing the State of Georgia for the whole.'

" Another cabinet meeting was called. The President was indignant and the Secretary of War was in a rage.

" You wrote me that you had never seen Jefferson Davis. He has a slight, light figure, a little above medium height, his head is well formed with a fine full forehead, square and high, covered with innumerable fine lines and wrinkles. His features are regular though the cheekbones are too high and the jaws too hollow to be called handsome. His chin is square and well defined, and his eyes deep set, large and full — one seems nearly blind, and is partly covered by a film. He dresses in a suit of slate-colored stuff, with a black silk handkerchief around his neck. His manner is more than reserved.

" ' Brown should be impeached — imprisoned! ' exclaimed the Secretary of War. ' The idea of the Governor of Georgia presuming to dictate to the President of the Confederacy.'

" ' Brown is a man of common origin,' said Mr. Davis. ' He cannot appreciate the dissimilitude of the Northern and Southern soldier. The defenders of the South are gentlemen; they prefer to furnish their own equipments and will never degrade their manhood by wearing government supplies.'

"There was a long discussion. Toombs advocated accepting Joe Brown's terms but nobody else would agree. Finally the President instructed Mr. Toombs, as Secretary of State, to telegraph, remonstrating with the Governor of Georgia and explaining that if there really was a war it would be only a matter of a few months at the longest and that the government of the Confederate States of America could have no use for the shoes, blankets and gun-boats he offered.

"Governor Brown's reply was prompt and unchanged. Rumor states that he is no longer popular with the administration. He will lose no sleep on that score. He sold his ten thousand pairs of shoes, ten thousand pairs of blankets and his two little gun-boats at the mouth of the Savannah River without the loss of a penny to Georgia. I shouldn't be surprised to learn that he made them pay cash and in gold. Now we are all looking for that promised first blow.

"When that first gun fires, my dearest, if the North doesn't truckle under, as everybody here, except Mr. Stephens and a few others, believes it will, you may look for me on the next train.

"Nobody can blame me, under the circumstances, for being glad for the war to begin."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SHOT THAT DELUGED THE COUNTRY WITH BLOOD

ON the morning of April 12th, 1861, President Lincoln left his bed at 4.30 o'clock. People say he was awakened by the roar of the signal-gun of the war—the first shot fired at Fort Sumter. Perhaps they are right, for Abraham Lincoln walked always step by step with the people. Never behind, never ahead but always with the people. To their every heart-beat, his throbbed a response. Did he hear the roar of that cannon in Charleston harbor that morning when it tore asunder the hush that had fallen, like a pall, over the country, when the sound of his voice reading his inaugural address died away? It was late in the afternoon before the telegraph brought him the news; yet all day long, they say, he knew it.

His special messenger found him in the library of the White House, walking slowly, heavily, like a man in a dream. His strongly-marked features were drawn, he had deep circles under his eyes and seemed to be gazing at something far away. He did not reply to Mr. Herrick's salutation but stared at him blindly, and the far-away expression in his face did not change. Was he looking at future battlefields, hearing the roar of other cannon, the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying? Then God alone could measure the agony in his heart.

It was an hour before the President awoke in the White House, that David had met Twiggs Beverly hurrying along Hayne Street in Charleston.

"Where are you going?" he asked, running after him. "What have you heard?"

"Oh, it's coming at last," Twiggs exclaimed. His face was flushed, his eyes brilliant with exultation, his

new uniform was awry, and he looked as though he wanted to fling his cap above his head and shout for joy. "Beauregard has refused Anderson's terms and notified him that in an hour he will open fire on Sumter. I came up to tell Margaret — I promised her I would — she wants to go to the Battery to see the first gun fired. God, how I wish I could be at Fort Johnson! That will fire the signal gun." He turned and was hurrying away.

"Where is Miss Margaret?" David asked, running after him again. "I will take her to the Battery if you want to go to Johnson. Where did she tell you to come for her?"

"By God, David, you're a white man!" Twiggs cried, his face beaming with delight. "Margaret is at Mrs. Rutledge's — they are having a ball — they began to dance at midnight and sent word to Beauregard they were going to keep it up until he fired that first shot, if they had to dance a week. She wants to get back to Mrs. Cameron's facing the Battery and go up on the housetop. I'll love you all my life for this, David — for giving me a chance to take a hand in firing the first shot at that damned Yankee flag. I must get back to the wharf and make those black rascals row me over to Johnson." He turned to go, then called back: "You'll tell Margaret I hadn't forgotten my promise. Tell her I'll bring her a piece of the first shell that's fired."

He was off and David stopped for an instant to look after him. He was running swiftly down the street holding his sword under one arm — the sword which his great-grandfather had flashed over his brigade of patriots in the Revolution, which his grandfather had drawn against the British in the War of 1812, and which had been in his father's hand when he fell at the head of his company under the walls of Chapultepec. A lump rose in David's throat and he turned and set out to find Margaret.

He had not seen Margaret since their return from Europe, but he felt sure he would not need to have her pointed out and he wondered if he would have to tell her his name. He entered the ball-room during a pause in

the dance, but the scraping of a fiddlestring from the group of negro musicians in the back passage-way warned him that it would soon begin. Instinctively his eyes turned to the largest knot of uniforms. Not a man in sight was dressed as a civilian. He crossed the room and looked over their heads at the girl they surrounded. He almost gasped. Four years had transformed Margaret from a lovely girl to a gloriously beautiful woman. As though attracted by the intensity of his gaze she glanced up and smiled. The sensation that swept to his head when he saw the look of recognition flash into her eyes was like that produced by his first glass of champagne.

She left her seat and without a word of greeting took his arm.

"The next dance belongs to Mr. Hamilton," she declared, in answer to the remonstrances of the men about her. "He has come all the way from Montgomery to claim it."

"Shall it be a dance?" David asked, smiling down at her. "I met Twiggs on the street coming for you and I begged to be allowed to come in his place. He told me that the bombardment of Fort Sumter would begin at half past four — it now lacks only thirty-four minutes of that time."

For a moment Margaret stared at him, speechless, then she laughed.

"Hurrah for General Beauregard!" she cried, snatching the scarf from her shoulders and waving it above her head. "He will fire the first shot at the Yankee flag within half an hour. Hurrah for General Beauregard!"

They all cheered with her until the room rang. Then they crowded around David, clamoring for information. At the request of the hostess he stepped up on the sofa. There was a breathless silence. When he had given the facts as learned from Twiggs their applause broke forth. Gentlemen and ladies clapped their hands and waved their handkerchiefs, cheering.

"God bless Beauregard! Down with the Yankee flag!

Hurrah for the stars and bars! Hurrah for the Confederacy!"

They rushed from the house towards the Battery, cheering as they ran. The people in the streets, divining what was about to happen, joined in their shouts and followed them. Doors and windows were opened, people came pouring from the houses and rushed towards the sea wall. The city resounded with the shouts.

"Thank God it's coming at last! God bless Jeff Davis! Down with the Yankee flag! Hurrah for the stars-and-bars! Hurrah for Beauregard!"

For days every train that rolled into Charleston had been packed. From every county in South Carolina, from Georgia, from Alabama, Florida and every cotton and border State, ladies and gentlemen had come, eager to witness the opening scene of the contest, — to see the stars and stripes, the flag that had never known defeat, lowered and the stars and bars run up in its place. The Battery was thronged; every door, window and housetop, from which a view of the harbor could be had, was filled.

As the fateful minute approached their cheers ceased. In the gray dawn the city seemed to hold its breath. All eyes gazed across that beautiful bay, riveted on Fort Johnson.

At last it came; the stillness was broken. From a mortar on Fort Johnson the signal shell of the war flashed forth with a roar. It sped screaming aloft, described an arch of fire and bursting over Fort Sumter, fell with a reverberating crash in the very centre of the parade ground.

The cheer that went up from Charleston was as a great shout from one throat. Then silence! All ears listened, all eyes watched. Would Sumter take up the gage of battle? Not a sound, not a sign of life from the grim fortress in the centre of the harbor!

Another shell rose high in the air, Fort Moultrie's voice of defiance. Then Cummings' Point, Battery Bee, Stevens Iron Battery, Castle Pinkney, and Fort Johnson again! In less than half an hour the batteries and mor-

tars that encircled the doomed fort were in full play against it. But still Sumter made no reply, gave no sign of life.

"What on earth is the matter? Do you suppose they are going to give up without firing a gun?" Margaret asked David.

He shook his head, and pointed to the shadowy sails of two ships in the offing.

"Unless I am mistaken," he said, "there are the expected reinforcements! — Major Anderson is on short allowance in both food and ammunition and he's waiting, hoping for their support."

"Can they reach him? Can they get in the harbor?" Margaret's excitement was intense.

"Not unless they are impervious to shot and shell. Beauregard has everything prepared. A drum fish couldn't enter that harbor without his permission."

"Thank God," she exclaimed, and there could be no doubt of her sincerity. "Then Twiggs won't have an opportunity to throw away his life?"

David looked at her in startled surprise. They were seated on the flat tin roof of the Cameron house, near one corner and a little apart from the other spectators. Margaret went on:

"It is what I expect, David, — what I know will come at the first opportunity. That is the reason I came to Charleston. Never if I live a thousand years shall I forgive Annie Laurie."

There are no words to express David's astonishment. He thought his ears had deceived him. He bent towards Margaret and whispered

"Annie Laurie!"

"Yes, she threw him over and he's been a changed boy ever since. Did he never mention her to you?"

David made no reply. He could only stare at her and wonder if the world were indeed coming to an end. Margaret's eyes filled with tears.

"Oh, David, I couldn't tell you how I used to love that girl. After we went to Washington I always looked upon her as my sister — never thought but that she would

eventually marry Twiggs. You know we never went anywhere without her. It was as much on Twiggs' account as mine — more. And the night of Mr. Buchanan's inaugural ball — you remember how beautiful she looked? Twiggs went crazy about her. When she danced with the President — it was the only dance he would permit her to give to any one else — he never took his eyes off her. It was that night she promised to marry him."

"To marry him?" David put his hand up and loosened his collar as though it were choking him.

"They were only children of course, but he was in earnest and he believed that she was. The next morning when mamma waked us up and told us that she had decided to go to New York at once, Twiggs was pretty stubborn at first. He told her about Annie Laurie's promise and refused flatly to go. Mamma had a hard time with him at first I expect, but finally he gave in. I had a long talk with him in New York. I told him that if Jack could trust me to wait for him I thought he might trust Laurie, who everybody knew was much more trustworthy and constant. He came round then and told mamma he would not write to Laurie, as Jack and I had promised we wouldn't correspond. He kept his word, but I am sure she was always in his thoughts. Morning, noon and night he was whistling or singing 'For bonnie Annie Laurie.' That was the way they discovered that he had such a fine voice. Have you never heard him sing since he took lessons in Paris?"

David cleared his throat but his voice wouldn't come.

"Oh, David, you must! He has a wonderful voice — everybody says so — the sweetest tenor I have ever heard. He told me his only object in taking lessons was to be able to sing with Laurie — he wanted to surprise her. Our steamer arrived in New York at night but he would go ashore. He took the first train to Washington. He would send us a telegram, he said. Mamma and I knew he hoped to persuade Laurie to marry him at once and go South with us. We waited all next day but his telegram didn't come. The next morning while we were

at breakfast Twiggs walked in. 'I have taken berths on the Savannah steamer sailing at noon, mamma,' said he. 'When can they get your trunks?' 'Where is Laurie?' I asked. I was so taken by surprise that I couldn't think. Twiggs shrugged his shoulders. 'Oh, she's promised to marry another fellow,' he answered, with a grim sort of a smile. From that day to this, David, he has never mentioned her name, referred to her, nor sung 'For Bonnie Annie Laurie.' He sings everything else but never her song.

"Didn't she tell him whom she had promised to marry?" David asked.

"I don't know. Neither mamma nor I have ever dared to ask. Mamma says he will forget, but I know Twiggs — he doesn't forget — Ah, what are they doing?" she cried pointing to Fort Sumter. "They are running up the flag. What does that mean?"

Before David could speak a cannon from Sumter belched forth a reply. After nearly two hours' silence under continuous fire from the hostile forts Major Anderson had taken up their gage of battle and war was on. His first shot struck Cummings' Point, the next went crashing into Battery Bee, then he opened a steady fire on Moultrie. The Confederates cheered his vigor and sent derisive shouts to the ships standing idle without the bar; there were three of them now.

The duel continued all day. In the afternoon the fire of Sumter slackened, and after dark it ceased, but the Confederate batteries kept steadily on.

It was not until after midnight, when the rain began to fall in torrents and the wind dashed the waves high against the sea-wall, that the crowd left the Battery. What a spectacle they had witnessed! Never had a war a more dramatic beginning.

The next morning the duel was renewed. At nine o'clock Fort Sumter was on fire, but its cannons continued to thunder forth their defiance. A little past noon its flag staff was shot away. The stars and stripes disappeared. The fire from the Confederate forts slackened, boats set out from three different points with

offers of assistance to the blazing fort. The drums in Charleston began to roll, the bands to play "Dixie" — then stopped. The stars and stripes had appeared once more, floating from a new flag staff. The Confederates cheered and opened fire again. Half an hour passed — perhaps more — then slowly the national flag, for the first time in history, was hauled down. Fort Sumter surrendered.

The next day, Sunday, April 14th, with colors flying and drums beating, after saluting his flag with fifty guns, Major Anderson marched his little band out, and at last the Confederate flag waved over Fort Sumter. Charleston gave itself up to joy. The churches were crowded. At the Catholic cathedral a Te Deum was celebrated with great pomp. The venerable Episcopal Bishop in St. Philip's and the rector at St. Michael's thanked God for a bloodless victory and for interposing his hand in behalf of their righteous cause. In Montgomery the "first triumph of the Confederate arms" was celebrated with enthusiasm. Alec Stephens shut himself up in his room and Bob Toombs held his peace. Both had already become unpopular with the President of the Confederacy. Throughout the South thoughtful people became more thoughtful, asking themselves: "Jefferson Davis has acted, what will Abraham Lincoln do?"

The newspapers of Monday morning answered their question. They published President Lincoln's call for 75,000 militia to protect the national capital and to suppress the combination obstructing the execution of the laws of the United States.

That day David asked for a two weeks' furlough and boarded the train for Washington.

CHAPTER XIX

JACK'S STORY

"'Tis the law of God in the human soul,
'Tis the law in the Word Divine,"

Annie Laurie sang. The brilliancy of her voice was conviction, the sweetness regret — regret that to the man she loved the words of her song were not the Law Divine.

"It shall live while the earth in its course shall roll,
It shall live in this soul of mine.
Let the law of the land forge its bonds of wrong,
I shall help when the self-freed crave;
For the law in my soul, bright, beaming and strong,
Bids me succor the fleeing slave."

"Sing your name song, dearie," Mrs. Herrick called. She was walking up and down the front piazza of their cottage, waiting for Mr. Herrick to come home from the White House to a late supper. "There is nothing you sing half as well."

Annie Laurie, seated at the piano in the little parlor, answered with a ripple of laughter that expressed both sunshine and shadow. She knew that Mrs. Herrick understood and sympathized with her sentiment but, thinking of David, did not approve of her singing an abolition song. She touched the piano and began the old Scotch ballad.

"Maxwelton braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie,
Gie'd me her promise true,—
Gie'd me her promise true,

Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doon and dee — "

As she played the bar between the verses she glanced back over her shoulder. David was standing in the doorway.

" Dearest," he said, " I have come for you."

In a moment she was in his arms clinging about his neck. All the doubts and fears that had tormented him since his conversation with Margaret on the housetop in Charleston vanished. Margaret had been mistaken, Twiggs deceived by the ardor of his own love. Annie Laurie was the same tender, loving girl she had always been and her heart had always belonged to him.

" I have been expecting you," she said, smiling up at him. " I felt sure you would come this week."

" And you are ready to marry me? "

" Yes, dear."

" To-morrow? "

" Yes, to-morrow." She drew away from him gently, brushing the mist from her eyes. " You must return to the South and do your duty, I — I cannot let you go alone."

He drew her to him again and kissed her golden hair.

" I bought a little house in Crawfordsville before the State seceded. I wanted to fix it up and have it for a surprise for you; but now Mr. Stephens says that you must come to him. He will need you when I am away. Will you go, dearest? "

She looked up quickly her eyes wide with awed surprise.

" Oh, David, since you are to be away it is the thing of all others I would like. He must have read my heart."

" Sometimes I think he has that power, dearest, the power to read the hearts of both men and women."

That night when he was leaving, going to Willard's Hotel for the night, she followed him to the gate.

" Are you sure you won't come running back this time? " she asked, her face dimpling with laughter.

"Sure you can trust me to wait for you until to-morrow?"

"Quite sure," he answered, as he slipped one arm about her waist and drew her head against his shoulder. "Not even the thinnest of shadows can ever come between us in the future, my dearest. I shall never question your love again." Here he had an impulse to tell her of his conversation with Margaret but, knowing it would wound her, he pushed the subject out of his mind. He bent to kiss her and asked: "You will be ready for me at eleven in the morning, my darling?"

"Yes, at eleven in the morning."

"Then we shall be able to take the two o'clock train."

"Mamma says we are to have a wedding breakfast and papa will want us to tell the President good-by. He has been kind to me whenever I have been at the White House, and several times, when my solo in church pleased him, he remained after service to shake hands and thank me. Besides —" She hesitated, then went on. "I would like you to see him, David. I believe it would help you to understand me."

"To understand you!" David laughed — a burst of genuine merriment. "Next you will be trying to convince me that you and Mr. Lincoln look alike."

Annie Laurie's face was very grave.

"In our convictions we are alike," she said. "You tolerate my 'notions' as you call them, because you love me — and because you think I shall change, but I can't change; I have tried. Ah, you don't know how hard I have tried since the bombardment of Sumter," she cried passionately, and she trembled a little. "You don't know how hard I have tried to believe the South in the right. But I can't, David, I can't. My detestation of slavery and my love of the American flag are woven in every fibre of my being. Mr. Lincoln has —"

"Never mind, sweetheart," David interrupted, looking down at her half smiling, half serious. "Slavery has nothing to do with our love. If you wish it we will have breakfast and then go to see Mr. Lincoln, or go to see

Mr. Lincoln and then have breakfast. It is your wish and therefore sacred. Only," he lifted his finger and shook it at her playfully, "before we do either, the minister shall make you my wife."

It was well on towards midnight when the gate closed behind David but Mr. Herrick had not returned. Those were busy times, Mrs. Herrick explained, and her husband often remained late to do some important errand for the President. The city itself was strangely unnatural to David. As he passed the War Department he looked curiously at the tree under which, as the cabman who had driven him from the depot told him, General Thomas stood when swearing in the District volunteers. About the grounds of the White House there were armed guards, something that David never had seen before. Pennsylvania Avenue was thronged. Men in uniforms and without uniforms were hurrying along, carts and wagons rumbling up towards the Capitol. The office of Willard's Hotel was crowded and men were talking and gesticulating excitedly.

"What is the excitement?" David asked the night-clerk, an old acquaintance, when he had wedged his way to the desk.

"Why, haven't you heard? A secession mob attacked the Sixth Regiment of Massachusetts to-day as they marched through Baltimore on their way to Washington."

"What!" David exclaimed. Then he asked more composedly: "Were there any wounded, any killed?"

"The first report said there were more than a hundred killed; then it dwindled to twenty, but a while ago an officer told me that only four soldiers were killed and a dozen or so wounded. The mob? Oh, he said that they made the gutters of Baltimore fairly run with blood, so I reckon they gave the secessionists a pretty good dose of their own medicine. We won't have any more trouble in Baltimore, I reckon." Here he touched David's elbow and bending forward whispered: "You can't believe a word they say. They are all damned liars and cowards. Mayor Brown and Governor Hicks have been keeping

the wires hot, begging old Lincoln to send troops by another route. I'll show you their latest telegram."

He opened the hotel register under his hand and using a dry pen pretended to make an entry. As he clapped the blotting paper over the page he glanced up and met David's eyes, then lowered his eyes significantly. David looked down, across the blotter was written:

"The excitement is fearful, send no more troops through here." Signed "Thomas H. Hicks and R. E. Brown."

"What did Lincoln reply?" David asked.

The hotel man turned over the blotter and David read:

"R. S. Felton, President of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad, Philadelphia: Send troops on prepared to fight their way through if necessary. A. Lincoln."

David glanced up inquiringly. The night-clerk slipped a second blotter over the first.

"Apprehending a terrible collision and bloodshed Hicks has ordered the telegraph wires cut, and the bridges on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad and on the Northern Central Railroad burned. The order will be carried out at midnight. A. Smith."

"Is this known here?" David indicated by a slight movement of his head the crowd behind him.

"By one man only, that tall fellow in gray talking with the group in the corner."

"Who is he?"

"The brother of A. Smith, though in Washington he is called Boyd. He was the man who spotted your friend Mr. Herrick."

David turned on him sharply.

"What has Mr. Herrick been up to?" he asked.

"Had more than half our friends turned out of their positions in the Government," the clerk answered — "lost Captain Schaeffer his commission as major and broke up the National Volunteers. He's one of the most accomplished spies in Washington. I thought you ought

to know it. Jerry Green told me he drove you there from the train."

"Yes," David answered. He was beginning to get a glimpse of life in this new Washington and he concluded that Mr. Herrick was not the only accomplished spy. "The Herricks are old friends of mine," he said.

The hotel man's nod was entirely professional. He straightened up and greeted the young man who had stopped at the desk.

"No, sir, we haven't a place for another person. Not even President Lincoln himself could get quarters in this hotel to-night. The parlors and halls are filled with shake-downs, and every chair and table in the dining-room and barber-shop are taken."

David looked the young man over idly. He was tall, wore a neat gray uniform with a spotless belt and shoulder straps, that set his fine figure off to perfection. As he turned away from his conference with the night clerk, David started.

"Jack!" he exclaimed.

"Why, David! I didn't know you were in Washington."

"I came in only to-night and I shall leave to-morrow."

The hotel clerk cleared his throat and David glanced in his direction.

"Pardon me, sir," the clerk said, addressing Jack. "I made a mistake. There is a small room that I was ordered to hold until midnight for a friend of the proprietor. As it is now well past the hour I will give it to you, if you don't object to —"

"No," said Jack, "I don't object; I'll take anything. Are you stopping here, David?"

The hotel man replied for him.

"You gentlemen have rooms quite near each other on the top floor and on the same passageway."

"Then do come. Let us get into them," Jack exclaimed, taking David's arm.

Jack's room was nearer the stairs, so David stepped in with him.

"You are the only real thing I have seen since I

reached Washington," Jack said, as he handed David a cigar and lit one for himself. "Everything else is like a nightmare. I had a glimpse of the half-finished dome of the Capitol in the moonlight. That made the whole hill look weird and unnatural, and Pennsylvania Avenue — crowded at this time of night! Half a dozen times I was within an ace of asking the cabman if he was sure this is Washington."

"Are you here on duty?" David asked. For some unknown reason Jack's high spirits made him feel depressed.

"Yes, I have come on ahead to make arrangements for quartering our regiment, the Seventh of New York. You know I belong to that, I suppose?"

"So I have heard," David replied, though he did not say Margaret had told him.

Jack looked at him an instant and his face sobered.

"I hope there is nothing personal in *your* feelings about this trouble between the North and the South, David?"

The seriousness of his tone brought David to his senses. He was quick to reply.

"I was thinking about your relatives in the South, Jack, and wondering what Margaret would say?"

"Oh, she has had her say." His chin squared and his head went up in the air. For the second time that night David was reminded of Twiggs. He had never seen the likeness before and now it made him wonder. "The day before the bombardment of Sumter began, she wrote me that unless I would fight for the South she would have nothing more to do with me. Her letter came the day the President's call for troops was published. I was on my way to the armory when I received it. On my return I wrote her that the regiment would come to Washington and I should come with it. Then she telegraphed me to return her letters and the miniature which she had painted for me in Paris. I shall do nothing of the kind." Again Jack's chin went up in the air and his eyes flashed.

This was a new Jack to David. He had always known

that he had any amount of quiet determination and would act according to his conscience, but that he would fight against the South, in defiance of Margaret's expressed wishes, was a revelation for which David was not prepared. He flipped the ash from his cigar, looked at it absently, then placed it on the bureau at his elbow.

"Knowing your prejudice against slavery, Jack, I never fancied you would fight for the South, but somehow I never thought of your fighting against us."

"It is not the South, David. I want you to understand that. It is the rebels who fired against the flag at Sumter. That act caused a resurrection of patriotism throughout the North. We all know that this rebellion was planned by a band of conspirators, disappointed politicians, that the people are not in it."

David shook his head positively.

"The people are in it now, Jack. You have lived in the South, you ought to know that when a Southern State secedes, every man, woman and child goes with it."

"But they did not agree to secession until they had been lashed into a fury against the Union by the speeches of the fire-eaters. Nobody knows better than you what staunch friends the Union had in the South, not a year back."

David was standing with one foot on the seat of a chair, his elbow was on his knee and his chin resting in his hand. He straightened up.

"I want to tell you something, Jack, and I'd like to say it to every man in the free States. The North is responsible for the bombardment of Sumter. Yes, and for the war that will follow, for there will be war. Don't you fool yourself into thinking the South will back down or be frightened by your resurrection of patriotism. You say I know that the Union had staunch friends in the South; yes, and I also know how hard those friends of the Union fought. It was the hardest sort of fight, for it was standing in your own door-yard, fighting your own blood and your neighbors. I have heard a great deal about the uprising in the North since the guns of Sumter, — of the ovation given troops as they pass

through the Northern cities, — of your own regiment, the Seventh of New York, marching down Broadway nine hundred and ninety-nine strong, the houses along their line of march swathed in the national colors, cheered by ten thousand in City Hall park, and the chimes of Old Trinity pealing forth Yankee Doodle. The very earth seems to quake beneath the tramp of Northern soldiers marching against the South. Why didn't you show that spirit before secession was an accomplished fact — when Alec Stephens was fighting for the Union in Georgia, when the Unionists of Alabama were threatened by William L. Yancey and while the battle was still on in Mississippi and Louisiana? Why did you not then say you would fight for the Union? When Lincoln was writing to Stephens, why didn't he say what he did in his inaugural address? He knew how the South had interpreted his 'house divided against itself' speech. In writing to Stephens why didn't he say he had no intention or inclination to interfere with slavery and did not believe the Constitution gave him the power to do so?"

"David," Jack remonstrated, "Lincoln could not have outlined his policy a few days after his election. It would not only have been a lack of courtesy to President Buchanan but — "

"Courtesy! Damn courtesy, when a nation's life is at stake! I tell you, Jack, you people at the North blame Buchanan because he did not reinforce Sumter. Future generations will curse him for not hanging that band of conspirators — senators and congressmen — who on the fourteenth day of last December, before South Carolina seceded, sent out from Washington a manifesto advising the secession of the Southern States and the formation of a Southern Confederacy. That was when Buchanan should have acted — and posterity will censure Lincoln for not making clear — " Here David bit his words off sharply. He remembered that he was in Jack's room and therefore taking him at a disadvantage. "How does your father feel about fighting the South?" he asked.

"As I do, that the rebellion must be suppressed and that the Union must not be broken." Jack's face was serious, and his voice was very quiet. "For the first time in three years, since I joined the Republican party, father and I are in sympathy politically. It is the first question he has taken a real interest in since the disappearance of my mother."

David sat listening to his words without heeding their meaning. His thoughts were engrossed by the change in the sentiment of the North towards the South, for in spite of his own experience, in spite of Mr. Stephens' warnings, he had, during the last few weeks, drifted into the belief common in the South: — If the North is not anxious to be rid of the slave States, at least she is not willing to coerce them into remaining in the Union. Now that dream was shattered. He saw only too plainly that the determined South faced an equally determined North.

"The disappearance of your mother?" He repeated Jack's last words absently. Then it struck him as a strange way to speak of one's dead mother and he looked up inquiringly.

"Of course we feel that she must be dead, though we have no absolute proof," Jack replied.

"No absolute proof of your mother's death?" David wondered whether he or Jack was losing his mind. He made no attempt to conceal his surprise.

"Why, David, is it impossible that no one has ever told you about my mother?" Jack asked earnestly.

"Never!"

"It happened when I was a small boy — though I remember it all as though it took place yesterday," Jack began simply. "She was not strong that year and the doctors advised mountain air. Father took her to a small health resort in the southwestern corner of Pennsylvania; I was sent to my grandmother in Framingham. Soon after they arrived in Pennsylvania my father was called back to New York on business. He left mother with the understanding that he would return as soon as possible. He had been in New York only a few days when he re-

ceived a letter from her telling him of the misconduct of her two negro maids. They were slaves she had brought with her from the South and had been with her since her babyhood. She wrote that she had decided to return to New York and asked father to meet her on a certain day in Philadelphia."

Jack stopped, regarded the stub of his dead cigar attentively for a moment, then tossed it into the open fireplace.

"That was the last we ever heard from her, David," he said, and his voice and manner were suspiciously calm.

David bolted upright in his chair.

"What!" he cried. "You never saw or heard of her again?"

Jack nodded assent and turned his head away. There was an instant's silence; then he went on.

"When she didn't appear in Philadelphia, of course my father went to the hotel where he had left her. The people were amazed. They told him — and proved — that she had taken the stage at the appointed time. Her two negro women had disappeared the night before, but when the hotel keeper remonstrated against her setting out on the trip alone she persisted, saying father would come to Philadelphia to meet her and be uneasy if she were not there. Her trunks were delivered, all her baggage in good condition. Never from that day until this, although we have followed up hundreds of supposed clues, have we been able to gain any trace of her."

"It was when you were a child — and she was quite young?" David asked sympathetically.

"Yes, young and very beautiful." Jack slipped his hand into the pocket over his heart and drew out a small case of red morocco. "This is her miniature, painted only the year before. When Twiggs was a little boy he was said to look very much like her. I have often thought they must have been alike in temperament, impulsive and independent."

David took the miniature and held it under the light. His heart bounded to his throat, then almost stopped beating. The furniture, the room itself went spinning

round, the floor and ceiling came together. Jack's voice continued to speak. What was he saying?

"The stage driver said many of the passengers got out to walk — they always did in good weather, the scenery was so beautiful. He didn't know — couldn't tell — who got out and who didn't. Even if the lady had fallen behind he couldn't understand why she hadn't taken the next stage which passed along that same road only three hours later."

The stage driver might not understand but David did. He had studied the map of those mountain roads too often with Captain John Brown and Mr. Herrick. He knew just where the stage roads forked, one going east and the other south. He only wished he did not know. There was no mistaking the beautiful, smiling face, the tender, truthful eyes that gazed at him from the miniature. Had it been painted for Annie Laurie herself it could hardly have been a better likeness.

David's eyes were fastened on the miniature. Less than an hour before he had held this girl in his arms, and kissed her good-by as his promised wife. His wife! He might as well think of a royal princess or of Margaret Beverly herself. His wife — the only daughter of the wealthy and exclusive ex-senator from New York and of one of the most aristocratic families in the South! An hour ago he had held her in his arms, she had been his. Now he would have to give her up!

Then the demon of temptation whispered in his ear. Why must he give her up? He loved her. He had shielded her from hardship, struggled months — yea, and years — when body and brain were weary, that she might wear dainty clothes, receive the education of a lady. What was the mere accident of parentage against all that he had done for her? Yes, tell Jack where he could find his sister, but let Annie Laurie decide between them. David sprang up.

"Must you go?" Jack asked. At the door he said: "I must see you again, David. What time will you breakfast?"

"Whenever you wish," David answered, and Jack thought his listlessness was caused by fatigue.

"Very well, suppose we say eight — and whoever is down first will have the other called. Good night, old man."

CHAPTER XX

THE CALL OF DUTY

ON leaving Jack David did not go to his room. He left the hotel, crossed Pennsylvania Avenue and walking out Fourteenth Street passed over the Long Bridge into Virginia and on along the Columbia turnpike. How far he tramped or where he went he never knew. At every step that devil walked at his side whispering:

"Tell Annie Laurie — let her decide."

Like the pictures of a kaleidoscope the scenes of his childhood passed before his eyes jeering him. The rude log cabin on the bluff, his father and his mother with their bare feet, their toil-roughened hands and their homespun clothes, the humble fish stall in the Augusta market, and — most horrible of all — that dreadful scene at camp-meeting — his mother in her uncouth Sunday clothes, his father with bare feet, yet wearing white kid gloves. Jack and Senator Clinton had been in the Greenwood tent. Both had seen and understood, David knew they had. Jack and Twiggs had not held it against him because the strong hand of Colonel Twiggs had drawn him among them as their school-mate and later Alec Stephens' equally powerful influence had given him position in Washington. They had accepted him as a school friend, as their intimate companion, but for him to lift his eyes to a daughter of their house — David knew the difference. He had known it all his life; it was a knowledge that seemed to have been born in him.

Dawn found him on the heights overlooking Great Falls. He turned his face listlessly towards Washington — the devil was still dogging his footsteps. He crossed

the Georgetown turnpike near the District line and struck into the bridle path skirting the brow of the heights above the Potomac. Half an hour later Georgetown and Washington lay spread out before him, while, on the heights above, the stately columns of Arlington shone white against its background of fresh green forest, with the river, like a stream of molten silver, winding between. But David had neither thoughts nor eyes for the beauties of the scenery. The devil's temptation was beating against his brain, the jeering pictures moving before his eyes.

He caught a glimpse through the trees of a man coming towards him on the path, and he started to turn aside. Then, seeing something familiar about his figure, David hesitated and looked at him again.

"Colonel Lee, I am very glad to see you," David cried, starting forward eagerly. "As a Southern man I want to thank you for refusing to draw your sword against the South. I heard last night that you had declined to accept Mr. Lincoln's appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army."

"I did only my duty, my boy, but I am glad you think me in the right," Colonel Lee replied, extending his hand cordially. Colonel Robert E. Lee was a notably handsome man in the prime of life. His figure was tall and admirably proportioned, his features were regular and the smile with which he greeted David was peculiarly sweet. "I hope you are on your way to Arlington," he added.

"No, Colonel, I won't have time to call on Mrs. Lee this trip, much as I should like it. I arrived in Washington only last night and I must leave for the South today." David's brow clouded and the smile left his face. "I had a — a question to decide and came out for a walk, thinking it might clear my brain."

"I sometimes do that myself," Colonel Lee said, and his eyes passed beyond David and rested on the flag floating over the White House. "As you say the exercise and fresh air clear your brain and — " His voice sank and he seemed to forget David's presence and to be

thinking aloud. "It gives me strength to fight my battles."

"But if instead of fighting against Indians or Mexicans you had to fight against yourself?" David asked earnestly.

"I have fought such battles," Colonel Lee answered.

He had turned and they were walking side by side, along the path and towards Long Bridge.

"When you didn't know which road to take, which was right, which was wrong?"

Now David had no intention of making a confidant of Colonel Lee or of any one else, nor of asking advice. He knew that he was facing a crisis in his own life as well as in that of Annie Laurie. He had never shirked responsibility, he had no idea of doing it now, but it soothed him to talk to Colonel Lee. His mere presence, the sound of his quiet, sympathetic voice, seemed to strengthen his resolve and silence the whispered temptation of the devil that had pursued him.

"The road of duty is always the right road," Colonel Lee replied quietly.

"Duty — but how can you tell which is duty?"

"Have you forgotten Our Lord's struggle in the Wilderness? Duty is that against which temptation, or inclination, — call it whichever you please — always fights."

"And you have fought such battles?" David was looking at him with clear earnest eyes.

Again Colonel Lee's smile was ineffably sweet.

"From ten o'clock last night until a few minutes before I met you this morning, David, I tramped these woods fighting such a battle."

"Duty won?"

"Yes, thank God, I shall obey the call of duty."

They had reached a fork in the bridle path, the upper branch leading to Arlington House. David halted and extended his hand.

"You don't know how much you have helped me, Colonel Lee," he said, and all the energy and decision that usually characterized his slightest movement seemed suddenly to have returned to him.

"God bless you, my boy," the officer replied, grasping his hand warmly. "I know that you will always do your duty."

An hour later when a servant knocked at David's door, and, told him that Jack was waiting for him in the dining room, he was sealing two freshly-written letters. He handed one of them to the boy.

"Do you know that address?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, sah," the negro replied, grinning. "It's on the t'other side of the War Office, near Washington Circle. An' I knows Miss Annie Laurie Herrick too, sah. She's the prettiest young lady in the city and every Sunday a big crowd of people go t' the New York Avenue Presbyterian church t' look at President Linkum and hear her sing. Yes, sah, I knows Miss Annie Laurie well. What time does you want this letter to git to her, sah?"

"What time can you deliver it at the house?" David asked.

"Some'ers roun' ten o'clock, sah. Maybe a little bit sooner, sah."

"Then I want you to take it yourself," and David handed him a coin.

The dining room was crowded, but he found Jack seated alone at a little table, reading the morning paper.

"I've ordered coffee, David," Jack began, folding the paper and sticking it behind him. "I knew we —"

"I am leaving Washington sooner than I expected," David clipped in, and he tossed a letter over the table to Jack. "I wrote that, fearing I might not see you. There is one thing — I shall be very glad if you can avoid mentioning my name when you see Mr. Herrick."

"Mr. Herrick!" Jack showed his surprise. It had been years since he had seen or thought of his old teacher.

"That letter will explain. Now, I must be off." He extended his hand and Jack grasped it firmly.

"I am sorry not to have seen more of you, David," he said. He didn't understand his old school fellow's manner, but he determined not to allow that to affect

his own. " But if we are to have war, I shall pray God that we do not meet again until it is over."

They stood for a moment oblivious of the noisy crowd around them, their hands clasped, gazing into each other's eyes. Then David's grasp relaxed and their hands fell apart.

" We will both do our duty, Jack," he answered, " whether we come face to face or never meet. No, don't come with me. I haven't time to talk and you will only lose your table. There are a hundred men at that door waiting for seats. I will send one to take mine. Goodby, Jack."

At ten o'clock David was speeding south as fast as a wood-burner dragging two dozen over-loaded cars could take him. General Scott was fuming and swearing over the resignation of Colonel Robert E. Lee, the officer he had recommended to President Lincoln as being best suited for the high position of Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army. While Annie Laurie —

Mrs. Herrick answered the door-bell, then came into the room where Annie Laurie was seated before the mirror putting the finishing touches to her hair before slipping into her white muslin wedding dress.

" Dearie," Mrs. Herrick said, " here's a letter for you. It has something hard in it, like a present. I think it's from David." Holding it at arm's length she squinted at it, then nodded her head repeating: " Yes, it's David's hand. I reckon he has sent you — "

" Miss Herrick, Miss Herrick, " called the shrill voice of a child from the back of the house. " Mammy Dilsy sarnt me to ax you must she put orange peelin' or peach leaves in the cup-custud? "

" Tell Dilsy I'm coming, Hannah," Mrs. Herrick answered, and she handed Annie Laurie the letter and turned hurriedly to leave the room.

" Mamma," Annie Laurie called; " Mamma, David is not coming. He has returned my ring."

Mrs. Herrick banged to the door.

" What did you say, Laurie? What did you say about Davie? "

"David is not coming to marry me," the girl said, the words dropping from her tongue like icicles. "He says his duty to the South prevents him from marrying a woman who advocates abolition."

Mrs. Herrick began to wring her hands and to shed copious tears.

"It's just our luck," she sobbed forth. "We are always being disgraced just as we begin to get along in the world. What will Mrs. Lincoln think? I went there the first thing this morning and told her all about your romance. What will people say?"

Annie Laurie was standing up tall and straight.

"I can't help what Mrs. Lincoln thinks," she answered, looking down at the weeping woman. "But nobody shall ever say that I broke my heart for a man who deserted me at the altar."

BOOK THREE

THE WELDING OF THE NATION

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST BLOW OF LINCOLN'S SLEDGE-HAMMER

AS a result of the trouble in Baltimore all direct communication between Washington and the North was severed. The day David left for the South the railroad bridges were burned. The next day the telegraph wires ceased to work. The only means of intercourse between the national capital and its loyal territory was by private couriers through the unfriendly State of Maryland.

Washington was in a panic. The wildest of wild rumors filled the air. Among the most appalling and persistent of the stories that flew like birds out of the unknown was that Beauregard's army, flushed by the victory of Sumter, was coming north as fast as steam could bring them. They would be joined by the troops of the recently seceded State of Virginia, and would attack and capture Washington. Beauregard did come north and he planted the stars and bars at Manassas Junction near the banks of a little stream called Bull Run, some twenty miles south of the District of Columbia. Every morning thereafter the people of the national capital, on awakening, rushed to their windows and craned their necks to see which flag was floating over the White House.

They knew as little about the conditions in the South as they did about conditions in Timbuctoo. The President of the Confederacy was as anxious to cover the

approaches to its new capital, Richmond, as the President of the United States was to fortify Washington.

Before this, troops had begun to arrive in Washington, led by the Sixth Massachusetts. Then they came in swarms until both banks of the Potomac were a line of breastworks.

The city promptly recovered from its panic and was as promptly seized by a virulent attack of boastful confidence which spread like wild-fire through the loyal States. Beauregard's army was a rabble of ragamuffins, the Virginia troops were no better. It needed only a demonstration from the Grand Army of the Republic to make them all skedaddle. Who was afraid? General Scott and President Lincoln did not feel secure, perhaps. Scott was too old and Lincoln too green. Nobody considered them. Certainly Congress and the newspapers didn't. Their enthusiasm was unbounded. "On to Richmond" was their war-cry and the reluctant generals obediently began to move.

Day and night the tramp of soldiers was heard. Gorgeously uniformed staff-officers and orderlies galloped through the streets of Washington, across Long Bridge, back and forth between General Scott's headquarters and the Arlington House, the headquarters of his first lieutenant, General McDowell.

Soon there came a day when all was declared in readiness. The demonstration was about to be made. The halls of Congress were empty, Washington was deserted. Spavined cart horses sold for upwards of a thousand dollars, wines and hampers of provisions cost ten times as much as the day before. Everybody joined McDowell's army or followed in its wake, confident of seeing the Lord deliver the Philistines into his hands.

At dawn on Sunday many of these confident ones stood on the hills beyond Centreville. They had come to see a great battle scene, to look at the red animal, war. Spread before them was a beautiful bit of pastoral woodland scenery, enclosed in a framework of blue and purple hills. It was not a level plain. Undulating lines of forest marked the courses of Bull Run, Young's Branch

and the lesser streams, dotted at intervals with green fields and cleared lands.

The sun rose behind their backs. When its yellow rays struck full and mellowingly on the earth they saw two long thin black columns, like serpents, crawling along the Warrenton Turnpike towards Bull Run. They watched them curving and twisting as they broke into regimental pieces and settled into position guarding the stone bridge. Other serpents, changing black and purple with an occasional flash and glitter of steel on their backs, took the places of the first two on the turnpike, but they turned to the right, dragged themselves over the brow of the hill, their heads disappearing in the woodland while their interminable bodies still wriggled in the road.

Far in front of these lines of uniformed figures, changing from black to purple in sunshine and shadow, in a clearing yellowed by sunlight they saw a handful of wee skirmishers falling rapidly back. A wee battery dashed along the line of the horizon, the wee riders lashing their wee horses, while farther over towards the left a group of wee cavalry went dashing across a field.

"There are the rebels," a lady with an opera-glass exclaimed, and she laughed in great glee. "Won't it be splendid to see them all running, chased by our army? Oh, I wish General McDowell would begin the bombardment. I'd love to hear the cannons roar and see the rebels skedaddle."

"You must give our men time to get in position," a United States senator replied, and he fingered his watch-chain and smiled in high good humor. "McDowell has every move planned. When he begins it will go like clock-work — like clock-work. Every officer knows exactly what he is to do and the exact moment he is to do it." He turned to one of the officers who had straggled from the regiments of the reserve and who had no business at all to be among the sight-seers. "About what time do we begin to move on to Richmond?" the senator asked.

"Not later than noon to-day, Senator, not later than

noon," the officer replied pompously, and forthwith he began a long-winded harangue, a pretended explanation of the movements of the troops below and of McDowell's plans, in spite of the fact that he knew nothing about them. "That's Sherman's brigade, Tyler's division," said he, pointing to the column which was falling into position above the stone bridge. "I was in his camp last night, calling on my friend Jack Clinton. Know ex-Senator Clinton of New York, Senator? No? One of the richest men in the city of New York and one of the most cultured in the country. Great friend of mine." Here he clapped his hand on his sword, advanced one foot and puffed himself out until his tightly buttoned coat looked like the skin of a balloon.

"Not returned to the Senate, I suppose," the senator remarked, expressing the fear uppermost in his own mind.

"Yes, yes indeed! Returned and resigned a full term. Didn't want it, wouldn't have it! Jack's the same way. Was an officer in the Seventh New York! Finest military organization in the country, sir! Scott himself acknowledged our superiority — a regiment of brigadier-generals — that's what he called us. Not a man in it who has ever earned his own bread."

The officer gave himself another inflation, fiddled with the hilt of his sword, then fell to stroking his beard, making a vain effort to look unconscious of his own grandeur. "Jack resigned. Enlisted for the war, lieutenant in the 69th New York. All working men, no associates. Jack thinks Sherman's a wonder, but —" The officer shook his head. "He's a tough, Sherman's a tough. Without refinement! Doesn't know how to treat a gentleman! Keeps his men on the jump, allows no shouting in his camp, threatened to shoot an —"

"Look at those horsemen. Who are they?" the lady cried, interrupting the officer's prattle, and she waved her opera-glasses excitedly. "There they are crossing the stream above the bridge, riding straight towards the rebels."

She pointed to a half-dozen horsemen, Georgia cavalry

recently attached to the command of Colonel J. E. B. Stuart, moving swiftly towards the Confederate lines. They had been out on a scouting expedition and were returning to report the flank movement being made by the Union Army. As they dashed into Bull Run the gallant figure of the leader — horse and rider — came boldly into view. The horse was a tall sorrel with four white stockings. The rider was Captain Decatur Fulton.

" That's Sherman and his staff," asserted the officer. " Not afraid of rebels! Knows they'll all run! Lived among 'em! Head of their military school in New Orleans, will — "

A shell burst from the Union battery below the stone bridge and went swirling into the woods beyond Bull Run, shrieking like a storm banshee.

A gust of applause burst from the spectators on the hills. Some four miles away, and a mile or so from the Confederate headquarters, Private David Hamilton looked up in astonishment from the fire he was kindling.

" Gee whiz! there go the Yanks! " remarked Private Marschalk, and he dexterously cut the lean from a hunk of bacon and halved it. " Put it in your haversack, Davie, it's mighty good to stay an empty stummick with."

" Why! " exclaimed David. " Why, aren't you going to cook it? "

Bubber Marschalk glanced up, his mild blue eyes wide with surprise. Then he began carefully to store away his half of the lean meat as he replied:

" Ye ain't never fit under Bartow and Bee alongside er Jackson or ye wouldn't ax that question, I reckon. Less 'n an hour we'll be double quickin' it t'wards that gun so fast that a horse'll have to come at a right sharp trot to keep up with us. Look at the comp'ny."

David looked. Nobody was paying the slightest attention to the fires which only a few minutes before they had been to such pains to gather wood for and kindle. Each man was busy storing away his uncooked food, filling his cartridge box, or in some way making himself ready for the march.

This was to be David's first battle. Since leaving

Charleston his duties on General Beauregard's staff had kept him flying back and forth, to Richmond, to Winchester, to Harper's Ferry, missing every little brush that had taken place between the two armies, not getting even so much as a whiff of the smell of powder or coming within sound of a cannon.

The day before, when the first detachment of the Army of the Shenandoah arrived, he had respectfully requested to be relieved from staff duty and to be allowed to join a Georgia regiment as a private. There is always room for privates, so David's request was granted.

Marschalk's prophecy proved true. In an incredibly short time the regiment stood in ranks, prepared. Off to their right came the tramp of many feet. Occasionally David caught a glimpse, through the trees, of gray soldiers moving in close compact columns. The Staunton Artillery came grumbling and creaking by, Captain Imboden swearing like a pirate. From along the road David heard the sharp clickety-click of a galloping horse. He knew it was the coming of orders. A jangling horseman drew rein before Colonel Gardner. They held a short, sharp-worded conversation. The regiment craned its neck.

The horseman tossed his fingers to his cap, wheeled his animal and galloped away. A moment later the regiment was swinging off towards the stone bridge. The men began muttering speculations. There was a subdued debate between Bubber Marschalk and a tall Burke County blacksmith at his left.

" They say we goin' t' have a big battle sure 'nough an' no mistake about it this time," quoth the blacksmith.

" Who ses so? " demanded Bubber.

" A fellow from the 4th Alabama I met in the road. He ses Yanks thick as hops t'other side of the crick. He heard Cap'n Fulton tell General Bartow."

" Ef Dick Fulton ses so, it mus' be so. But I don't b'lieve they'll fight. They'll do jes' like they done the time we waited all day long for 'em at Bunker Hill. They'll tromp out an' show theyselves an' then tromp

back agin. I always heard Yankees wus mighty hands for walkin'; I b'lieve it now."

The regiment wheeled into the turnpike. Another regiment was before them, and from behind also came the jingle of the equipments of marching men.

The two generals and their staff came dashing forward. Colonel Gardner spoke to them.

"General, my men have been twenty-four hours without food. There were no rations to be had last night. This morning uncooked rations were distributed only a few moments before your order came to hold the regiment in readiness."

General Bee's answer came very distinct on the clear morning air.

"You'll have plenty of time to cook and eat, to the music of the battle, Colonel. We shall probably take little or no part in it."

David sighed and Bubber Marschalk bobbed his head at the tall blacksmith.

"'Tain't right," complained the other. "I want t' do some fightin'. I ain't no Yank. I didn't come here t' walk. I was in the hospital — hurt my han' blowin' a charge out my ol' flint-lock — when you-all had that little fight afore."

"We had to git 'em in a corner t' make 'em fight, an' they struck an' run 's soon 's they could git out," said Bubber.

"Well, then, why don't the general let us git 'em in a corner agin? Seems like he mought. I don't want t' go back home an' tell folks I ain't never fit no battle. Why, they'd make game of me, sure 'nough."

"Shucks, you'll have plenty o' time yit. Judge Courtney told my daddy this war'd las' nigh onter five or six years. Besides, how you know you kin fight? You ain't never seen no battle. You can't tell but what you'll cut and run like blazes."

"What you take me for?" the blacksmith demanded fiercely. "You mus' be a damned little coward yo'self t' think sech thoughts about decent men. What you take me for, say?"

"Oh, I dunno," answered Bubber placidly. "I know plenty of as good men as me, who says they was scared. I ain't ashamed to own up. I was scared when the balls come a-clippin' leaves an' bark off trees all 'round me. I'd a' run too — Gee whiz! I'd a'beat the las' Yank on the field a-runnin', ef it hadn't been for knowin' somebody'd see me an' tell."

David wondered if he would be afraid and if he would run. He had heard of such things in men who had never been suspected of cowardice. He knew that Bubber had just as brave blood in his veins as he. His great-grandfather had fought in the Revolution, and both grandfathers had gone against the British in 1812. He would as soon think of General Twiggs himself running, as of Anno Domini or Peter Marschalk. It was a most uncomfortable train of thoughts, and a little panic grew up in his mind as he swung along.

When they halted and the regiment fell to pieces around Ball's ford, the intermittent canonnading, interlarded by the vindictive popping of the skirmishers, was still going on at the stone bridge. No sooner had they kindled their fires, preparing to cook their breakfast, than a staff officer came galloping up. He yelled something at Colonel Gardner, wheeled his horse and was off. Colonel Gardner yelled at the officers of the regiment. Captain Gordon Hazard and Lieutenant Henry Courtney came running towards their company, shouting and cursing at the top of their voices. They ordered the men to fall in, beating the laggards with the flat of their swords. Once David saw Lieutenant Courtney act as if he would drag the blacksmith by the ear.

Next, he found himself running across a clearing and up hill in the midst of men who were panting heavily. His musket was bouncing on his shoulder and his canteen banging upon his thigh. Where his haversack was he didn't know. He could pick out the voices of different men in jerky sentences.

"What — th' — devil — they — in — sich a hurry — for?" Bubber was trying to nudge his elbow. "Did ye — hear — what — that — officer — said, — Davie?"

"What we skedaddlin' — this — a-way fer — any — how?" came the blacksmith's voice. "They — oughtn't run — us — so fas' — I a' been — I a' been in — hospital."

"Keep off — my feet, — can't ye? Ye run like — a cow."

As they reached the top of the hill a shell went screaming over their heads. It fell in front of them, bursting into fierce red bloom and flinging up the brown earth. When they reached the woods, bullets began to whistle among the branches and to nip the trees. Twigs and leaves rained down on their heads. Many of the men were constantly dodging and once David saw Captain Hazard duck his head.

As they crossed the next clearing the din at their right swelled to a tremendous roar. The panting regiment was frozen into silence. David cast one quick glance over his shoulder. He saw a flag tossing angrily in the smoke, around it the blurred and agitated forms of struggling troops. The ever present skirmishers were running out of the woods, in the foreground, then falling back intent on their own little battles. He saw one drop down as he ran, then roll over on his back. David wondered if he were really dead or were playing Indian, as he and Jack and Twiggs had often done.

On the crest of the hill in their front an officer rode out of the pines. David recognized General Bee. He stopped and placing his cap on the point of his sword, waved it frantically. A wild cheer answered his signal and Imboden's battery came tearing towards him, the riders lashing their horses to a mad gallop, and scattering the stragglers right and left.

The regiment had hardly taken the new position in advance of the Henry house, when a hatless officer came galloping out of the smoke-blurred tumult in front. He held an angry conference with General Bee, and General Bartow joined them.

"God," David heard Captain Hazard say to Lieutenant Courtney. "Evans' crushed. We got to take the boys to help save 'em."

"What, down there?" Lieutenant Courtney motioned

with his sword across the bottoms, where the ground seemed covered by shells dropping and bursting into lurid bloom — giant war-flowers.

David felt cold chills chasing each other up and down his spine. The panic, that had grown up in his mind earlier in the day, returned. His legs were stiff, and, when the regiment started off with a jump, he lagged behind. In an instant Lieutenant Courtney attacked him.

"Come, move into ranks. No skulking in this regiment!" he cried in a loud insolent tone, beating him with the flat of his sword. Surprised, David sprang into position. Then an angry flush swept over him and he stepped back, determined to avenge the insult. Lieutenant Courtney was at the other end of the line, struggling with a fat private. He held him by the shoulders and was butting him in the back with his knees, all the while uttering such a torrent of strange black oaths, that David forgot his anger and began to laugh nervously.

Down they went across the smoke-infested fields with the shells screaming and bursting about them. David's face was blanched; he frequently made nervous movements, dreading the next shell. He heard Bubber at his elbow muttering.

"Oh, ye're in for it now, little Dutchy. But ye won't run, no, ye won't run. Ye'll stan' yo' ground with the best of 'em. Ye'll fight like the devil, fight like the devil."

The smoke was pushed aside. David got one glance at the foe-swarming field in front of them, and instantly lost concern for himself. He became not a man but a member of his regiment, a part of the army of the menaced South. He could no more have fled than his arm could have torn itself loose from his body.

There were dead men in their path, sprawling in strange attitudes as if they had been dumped down from the sky. He felt no horror of them, had no fear of a like fate.

There was a moment of waiting. They were prepared for an attack. There was a rustling and a muttering among the men. The officers were like shepherds, coax-

ing their flock. They moved up and down the lines, pushing the men nearer together, into more compact bodies, better alignment.

" Don't be in too great a hurry, boys," they repeated soothingly. " Don't shoot until I tell you. Wait until they get close up."

The billowing smoke in front of them was filled with horizontal flashes. A flag was jerked about madly. Wild battle noises came from behind the wall of smoke. A burning roar filled David's ears. He was enveloped in a red rage. He wished to rush forward and strangle with his fingers, to help those men struggling for their lives. Would the command never be given? What could the officers be thinking about?

From the smoke there burst a blue swarm of men. A flag tilted forward was in the lead. A shrill yell went up from the waiting regiment. Fire opened somewhere on the line and went ripping in both directions. David was working his weapon like an automaton. He found the task strangely exhilarating.

While he worked, his thoughts were everywhere. He was in a battle sleep, hearing and seeing things as if in a daze. He was conscious of Gordon Hazard standing in the rear and of the shell that went swirling over their heads and buried itself in the ground at the officer's feet; and he wished he'd be more careful of himself for Miss Ruth's sake. He saw the struggle between Lieutenant Courtney and the tall blacksmith, who at the first volley had thrown down his gun and rushed screaming from the ranks. He saw the man at his right drop down like a bundle, knew that he never stirred. When Bubber Marschalk rushed forward and took the flag from the dead fingers of the falling color-bearer, he smiled and thought how pleased Anno Domini would be when he told her the story, as he fully intended to do.

The heat of the battle shut down, enveloping him. His eyeballs were red-hot marbles. The sweat that streamed from his body blistered his skin.

At last he felt a rough hand pawing at his shoulder.

" Quit shootin', you damned fool, you! Ain't you got

sense to see they're all gone? " Henry Courtney's voice bellowed in his ear as Henry Courtney's face glared, grimy with smoke and sweat, over his shoulder.

For a moment he stared in the officer's face bewildered. Then he rose stiffly to his feet. Bubber Marschalk ran forward and began to fumble him over.

" Ye ain't hurt nowhere, is ye, Davie? Ye sure ye ain't shot? " he asked anxiously.

" Oh, durn it, let me alone, can't you," David snarled, and he began to feel around blindly for his canteen. Then he tried to wipe the smoke from his eyes with his sleeve.

" I thought ye mought a-been shot all unbeknownst to yo'self," Bubber apologized humbly. " My gran'daddy — Mammy's daddy — useter tell 'bout a man what — "

But David did not hear. Recovered from his bewilderment, he was gazing about him. The regiments lay sprawled out on the ground. They reminded him of the Greenwood pack after an all-night fox-chase.

A long line of wounded men was moving drearily to the rear. He saw one drop and his staggering comrades try to help him to rise.

The field in front was deserted save for those dark bundles that lay in lines, or dropped here and there in little groups as though they still strove to keep each other company. They reminded him of débris left on the shore after a storm.

As he listened, cheers mingled with the din that came to him from the hillside. A deep, pulsing thunder from afar made him turn his eyes anxiously to the left. Batteries were arguing with abrupt violence. On the slope of the hill towards Bull Run were the blurred lines of dark troops, splashed here and there with the warm color of the flags.

Suddenly cries of amazement broke from the regiment. The officers came running up. David turned his eyes back to the field. The blue swarm swelled into masses out of the distant woods. The tilted flag was again speeding forward.

The officers were after the regiment again like sheep-

dogs, nipping them here and shoving them there. The men moved their stiffened bodies slowly and began to fumble with their guns.

The sputtering of musketry began again. Then the cannon entered the dispute. The smoke-swallowed blue line curled and writhed, swung its ends to and fro, then sprang forward like an enraged beast.

Wild yells came from the billow of smoke. A regiment on their right dissolved and came galloping past like wild horses. They went whirling round their flank, the struggling officers carried along in the mad stream. They were screeching forth orders and striking about them with their swords and their fists, pounding every man within reach, swearing long purple-black oaths.

David was speechless with horror. He heard Bubber Marschalk at his side mutter:

"Gee whiz! Fourth Alabama's got crushed."

Then, above the passionate song of the bullets and the banshee shrieks of the shells, he made out the appalling cry of the fleeing men.

"Bartow's down! Bartow's killed!"

That earlier panic gripped him. The cold shiver that ran down his spine attacked the whole regiment. With a sound like a groan they turned and joined in the stampede.

In the midst of this chaos David clung to one thought.

The blood-gorged monster that had struck down General Bartow had devoured the other generals also. There was no doubt about it. Bee, and Beauregard, and Jackson were all dead and the army was going to destruction.

A mounted officer galloped among them. His hat was gone, his clothes were awry. David stopped and stared at him as if he were a ghost. It was General Bee.

He wheeled his horse and flashed his sword over the heads of his fleeing troops.

"Look at the Virginians, men! Look at the Virginians!" he shouted, pointing with his sword up the hill. "There is Jackson's brigade standing like a stone wall.

Rally behind the Virginians, men! Let us determine to die here, and we shall conquer. Follow me."

The scene that followed was like a blood-red blur to David. His tongue was dry and swollen, his throat almost closed, while a froth of saliva stood at the corners of his mouth. A despairing resolution was born in his heart. He hurled himself forward, snatched the flag from Bubber's surprised fingers, running after General Bee like a mad man. A long wailing cry swept over the shattered regiment as they surged forward, following him.

Once on top of the hill he docilely obeyed orders. He held the flag while the scattered troops rallied around it, company by company, regiment by regiment, until the remnant of the three brigades rallied and were led to their position. Then he walked to his own diminished regiment, handed the flag to Private Marschalk and fell into line.

"By God, Hamilton!" Captain Hazard was strutting before the regiment like a cock after conquering the barn-yard. "You're a regular war devil. I'm proud I've got a fellow like you in the regiment. If Beauregard had fifty thousand men like you, this war'd end to-day!"

David remembered the sensation of the cold shivers along his spine and was dumb.

Their rest seemed past in an instant of time. The unkillable, jangling officer came galloping up again. Without waiting for orders the regiment sprang quickly into position. They had been without food for nearly thirty-six hours, without water since early dawn, for full nine hours they had been marching and fighting, their joints were painfully stiff, their muscles quivered with exhaustion, but one determination shone in their eyes and was expressed by their sternly set jaws.

Stonewall Jackson's order was passed along to the three brigades.

"Reserve your fire until they come within fifty yards. Then fire and give them the bayonet. When you charge, yell like furies."

A line of numberless blue soldiers came sweeping up.

They could be plainly seen. Their features were distinguishable. David fell to counting their types.

There was an instant of strained silence. The regiment threw up their rifles and fired a pumping volley into their faces. Wild yells burst from their throats as they rushed towards the dusky faces floating in the pale sea of smoke.

The flag wavered. David's hand grasped it as Bubber sank down. He plunged like a mad horse to the front of the line. The swirling body of blue men, brought suddenly to a halt, broke and crumbled away in the smoke. One officer alone faced him. He was howling and cursing in his efforts to rally his men.

With his free hand David clubbed his musket and rushed upon him. The smoke drifted, the officer turned his face.

"J-a-c-k," David cried.

The officer lunged with his sword.

David's fingers turned to paste on the flag-staff. All the batteries of the universe roared in his ears, their shells bursting before his eyes. His legs seemed to die. He sank down, dragging the flag with him.

CHAPTER II

AFTER THE BATTLE

WHEN David opened his eyes the blue haze of evening was on the field. It may have been seconds, it may have been hours; he lay dreamily staring at the bank of cloud partly covering the red sun.

At last a thin trail of recollection developed in his mind. It grew broader, then longer, pieced out at both ends. He tried to rise, then fell back. A deep groan was wrenched from him and using his right hand he pressed his left arm against his side.

He fought a sinister battle with himself. With a writhing movement he got upon his hands and knees, then, like a child learning to walk, upon his feet. The struggle with himself went on. His smitten body, his dulled senses wished him to swoon, his mind stubbornly refused.

The din of the receding battle came to him like the roar of a train moving rapidly away. Remembering the flag he stared wildly about him. With his eyes he searched the ground, the still silent figures that lay scattered thickly about him. He had lost the flag, they had taken it from him. Who had taken it? Was it that last man, that officer in the blue uniform? The image of that angry white face flashed upon his throbbing brain, and with a sound like a whimpering sob he lurched forward unsteadily.

How far it was across the clearing! — and the dead men seemed all to be lying directly in his path. Sometimes he fancied they moved, drawing their limbs into strange contortions. One, he was sure, grinned at him when he made a detour to keep from stepping over his

body. Another clutched his foot, and he looked down stupidly, in no way surprised.

"Davie, is that you?" a weak voice questioned. "I was 'most afraid I'd be gone afo' ye could git back."

David's eyes cleared. His memory returned with one great brain throb. Energy came back to his smitten muscles; his wounded body was made whole. He dropped down on his knees beside the prostrate man.

"Oh, don't say that, Dutchy," he cried, his voice quivering with earnestness. "It can't be as bad as that. I'll help you up. You can lean on me. We'll get out in the road and find —"

Private Marschalk shifted his head wearily.

"I mought ef it was jes' one, Davie, but hit's fo'."

"Four!"

"Fust in my han' — but I didn't mind that. I jes' wropped my han'cher over hit an' kept on with the flag. The next was in my arm — b'jiminey, it turned me clean aroun' — but I didn't mind that. I caught the flag in my yother han' an' kept right on. Then they hit me in the stommick — it made me kind er blind an' weak an' it hurt like blue blazes fer a spell, but I helt to the flag an' kept a-goin'. The last was in my knee jint. I reckon hit must er keeled me over. — When I come t' my senses I was a-layin' on the groun' an' the fightin' had moved off somers. But I knowed ye'd come back for me, Davie, ef ye didn't git keeled yo'self."

"Yes, Dutchy — yes, Dutchy — I'll do all I can for you." David could not speak accurately for the knots and burrs that had risen in his throat.

"I knowed ye would, Davie. Ye allus was one to stan' by yo' friends. Ef ye'll jes' tell Mammy that I warnt no skulker — tell 'er that it was a thunderin' big battle an' that I fit fer Georgia — that I fit like hell —"

"Yes, I'll tell her, Dutchy — and I'll tell her about the flag — how when the color-bearer was shot down and the bullets were coming as thick as hail-stones and the shells were bursting everywhere, I saw you run and pick up the flag. I said to myself when I saw you do it

that I'd tell your mother and father what a brave boy you were."

A slow smile lit up the wax-like features of the dying soldier; for a moment life flared up in his eyes.

"Sure, did ye, Davie? Well I reckon they will be glad t' hear 'bout that. An' ye'll say ye seen me when I done it — ye'll say ye seen me when I done it," he reiterated in a bewildered way, as if not understanding what it meant.

Suddenly his eyes rolled in terror. He clutched David's arm as though dreading he would try to get away. Then he began to speak in a shaky whisper as though telling a great secret.

"That's what I want ye to promise, Davie — I want ye to promise to bury me. Back yander in the woods at Winchester — I seen a soldier — a Yank — they hadn't buried 'im — an' the buzzards — "

David threw his arm about him, crying out hysterically:

"Oh, Dutchy, I'll take care of you. I'll take care of you. I'll swear I will."

The dying man did not hear him. His eyes rolled in the wildness of his terror and he clung to David in an anguish of fear.

"They had pecked out his eyes — an' was — Ye won't leave me, Davie? I was allus a good frien' t' ye, Davie — allus a good frien' — I'd do as much fer ye, Davie. Ye'll promise me, won't ye, Davie? Ye'll bury me — ye won't leave me — "

"Yes — yes — Dutchy — I'll take care of you — I'll never leave you — I swear to God I will," David protested, making wild fantastic gestures in his efforts to impress Marschalk with his loyalty.

The wounded man's fears seemed suddenly to roll away. He became the same placid, quiet young Dutchman that David had known in his boyhood.

"Ye'll tell 'em I fit fer Georgia — I warn't no skulker — I fit — " Again his eyes flared. His features grew sharp with intentness. "Dick Fulton's comin'," he said. "Can't ye hear Spitfire's gallop? She's comin' like the wind."

David listened and presently there unraveled from the multitude of sounds roaring around them the faint clickety-click of a horse, coming at a mad gallop. Then it grew louder — louder — then changed to a soft thud — he had left the turnpike and was coming across the fields — then it ceased altogether.

" He's stopped," Bubber whispered, with a groan that was almost a sob. " He's stopped an' I can't wait — ye tell 'im I couldn't wait — I couldn't wait — "

He turned his head and closed his eyes, like a child falling into a peaceful doze. The tree above David's head began softly to sing the hymn of twilight. The roar of the tumult behind was moving farther and farther away. He sat looking down at the calm dead face on his knee. For the first time he saw its likeness to Anno Domini. The nose was like hers and the grim line of the square chin —

" Hello, Hamilton, is that you? " Captain Gordon Hazard called as he stepped from the fringe of undergrowth and walked across the little strip of clearing. " I might have known you would be here with Marschalk. Is he gone? " He stopped and, leaning on his sword as though it were a walking cane, gazed down at the still figure.

David made a little commonplace smile of welcome.

" Yes, he's just gone," he replied. " He told me to tell Captain Fulton he couldn't wait."

" Decatur is back there with Henry Courtney," Hazard said, and he nodded over his shoulder in the direction from which he had come. " Henry saw them keel Dutchy and he made me come to look him up as soon as Decatur came. Henry's done for too, I'm afraid."

" Done for too," David repeated with a thick tongue. He was holding his shoulder very still and a dragging weariness seemed pulling him to the ground.

" Shot through the lungs. I've sent for a surgeon and an ambulance. Not much use, I'm afraid! It's been a terrible day — Bartow killed, Bee and Kirby Smith carried off the field on litters, Jackson and God knows

who else wounded. Oh, it has been a terrible day, but thank God we made 'em run."

"Made 'em run?"

"Why didn't you know? When we charged them with the bayonet, they threw down their guns and ran like sheep." He threw back his head and laughed. "Jeff Davis arrived from Richmond just in time to see the last of them disappear over the hills, running towards Centreville with Jeb Stuart and his men chasing them — riding and yelling like a troop of wild Indians."

"There goes Twiggs," David exclaimed sharply. "Call him!"

Captain Hazard straightened up and began to shout, waving his cap above his head. The mounted officer crossing the field at the far corner turned, looked about him, then waving his hand — he was bare-headed — with a wild hurrah came jangling towards them.

"Oh, you've missed it," he cried enthusiastically, as he rode up. "You've missed the grandest sight of the day. Never has there been such a rout. The Yanks threw away their arms, shucked off their coats and everything they could get off, and went galloping, foot and horse, like a herd of buffalo in a stampede. Stop in Centreville? Well, I should say not! You never saw such a ruck in your life as that road through Centreville. I'll bet a hundred dollars they'll never stop this side of Washington. Oh, you've got a hell of a general," he added, turning fiercely on David. "What in the devil made Beauregard order the pursuit stopped? Stonewall Jackson 's madder than a hatter. He says with ten thousand fresh troops he could march into Washington to-night. There's Ewell's brigade and all the reserves — haven't fired a shot to-day. Why doesn't Beauregard order a pursuit and let us march into Washington?"

"March into Washington!" David glared back at him with insolent irritation. The little blistering voices of pain had begun to cry out from his wound again. "You are the hangdest man I ever saw for finding fault. The President is here. I s'pose you want Beauregard to disobey orders right before his face."

"Did the President stop the pursuit?" both Twiggs and Gordon asked.

"Stopped it more than a week ago. Beauregard submitted plans for three separate campaigns — all having Washington as the objective point. The President and his advisers all decided against attacking Washington."

"But why? Did you hear any reason?" Hazard asked.

"This is not a war of conquest; the Confederacy is only defending its own territory. We are here to drive the enemy out of Virginia and to protect Richmond."

"Well, I should have said that the capture of Washington would not only do that but would secure us Maryland and other border States, besides going a long way towards making the foreign powers recognize us," said Captain Hazard. "But if the President thinks it unwise, I'm with him. Jeff Davis was not only trained in West Point but he proved his capacity as a military leader in Mexico."

"Oh, yes, the President is right. There is no disputing his military record," Twiggs admitted, with a sigh of regret. "He fought battles before Beauregard was hatched, I reckon, but all the same I wish he'd just let Old Jack have a try at Washington — just to scare the Yanks and see how far the blamed fools would run." He glanced down at the huddled figure against David's knee. "Who have you got there, David?"

"Dutchy Marschalk."

"My God, little Dutchy!" He slipped down from his horse. Then he stood staring, first at David then at Captain Hazard. "Where is Decatur?" he asked. "Who has seen Decatur?"

"Oh, he's all right. He didn't get a scratch. I left him over there taking care of Henry Courtney."

"Henry Courtney too?" Twiggs's eyes were wide and very serious. "They told me at home that Peter Marschalk and Judge Courtney fought against secession until the very last."

Hazard gave a short nod of assent as he turned off.

"I'll go back to Henry," he said. "It's high time that surgeon put in his appearance. We are going to bury our dead over yonder, where we made our first stand, near where General Bartow fell." He pointed with his sword to the left. "You'll direct the men how to find Marschalk's body, Hamilton?"

"David and I will look after Dutchy," Twiggs called after the Captain's retreating figure. "That just proves that Gordon is a newcomer in our neighborhood. The idea of any of us allowing a stranger to bury Little Dutchy," he grumbled, as he dropped on his knees beside the dead soldier. "Poor little cuss! It was only last night he was laughing over the time he took us all down to the pawpaw bottoms and Margaret insisted on tasting a green persimmon. Now, you and I on the battlefield, with Dutchy dead, and Jack fighting on the other side — fighting against the South — who could ever have dreamed it? — and Margaret in Richmond refusing to go to a ball or buy a ribbon until the war is over, and Laurie — ah, that is the most wonderful of all, — that Laurie should be Jack's sister and our first cousin. She's in Europe with her aunt — Uncle Clinton's sister — going to remain — " He drew himself up with a jerk. "I have only heard from her through the one letter she wrote Margaret from Paris. Of course you know all about her plans?"

"No," David answered quietly. "I didn't even know she was abroad. I have never heard from her since the day Jack discovered her identity. She returned my ring and letters."

Twiggs straightened up and stared at him. After a moment's silence he said, apologetically:

"I didn't know, old man, — I shouldn't have mentioned it." Then he added hastily: "We'd better move Dutchy now. Will you ride and hold him in the saddle, or shall I?"

David's senses were so deadened that Twiggs's voice sounded miles away. He stared vacantly up at the saddle on the back of the tall hunter and the thought of his ever getting into it seemed preposterous.

"You ride," he said with a weak smile, "and — and I'll walk."

"All right," Twiggs replied, and he flung himself on the horse's back behind the saddle. "Now, just lift him up to me with his — "

David had risen to his feet and was staggering forward with one hand extended like a blind man. As he sank beneath the waves of darkness that lashed around him, he heard Twiggs, miles away, exclaiming:

"Why — why — David — David — you — too — "

When the billows of insensibility rolled away, he was lying on his back gazing through purple darkness at myriads of tiny lights. The idea that they were distant camp-fires slipped into his dull brain. Striving against the tide of numbness, he began to count them. Then it dawned on him that they were stars and that the motion he had attributed to the waves was a vehicle on wheels. He tried to rise and fell back with a groan. A firm hand was placed on his body and Decatur Fulton's voice spoke soothingly.

"Lie still, my boy! The doctor told me to make you stay flat on your back to keep that wound of yours from starting to bleed again. He says you have lost just about as much blood as you can stand. *He* thinks you've got a sword thrust through the shoulder but it was made by a Yankee bayonet, I reckon."

"No, it was a sword. An officer in the troops we charged with the bayonet!"

"Durn his skin! I hope you blew the top of his head off."

"I couldn't," David replied unwillingly. "I dropped my gun." Then he asked quickly. "What have you done with Dutchy?"

"Twiggs took him. They are burying all the dead of your regiment together. Gordon is superintending the work — marking each man's grave in case his family wish him removed. We are going to send Henry Courtney home."

"Henry Courtney, is he dead?"

"Yes, he died while the surgeon was dressing his wound," Captain Fulton answered.

For several moments there was silence between them, the wagon rolling, creaking over the rough road, turning first to one side, then the other, to pass around a broken caisson or a wrecked wagon or to avoid some slower moving vehicle. Finally David spoke:

"Where are you taking me?" he asked.

"To Manassas Junction to ship you to Richmond for Mrs. Beverly and Margaret to coddle until you can get a few ounces of blood to take the place of that you let out through the hole in your shoulder. All the boys in the regiment will be envying you, for Margaret is —"

The wagon came to a sudden halt.

"Mahse Decatur" — David recognized Cæsar's voice in the awed whisper — "here's a white man a-layin' right smack across dis road."

"Lie still, David, I'll see about it," Captain Fulton said, as he slipped down from the back of the wagon. Then David heard him call: "Cæsar, have you anything I can use as a bandage?"

"Nothin' but de rest of my shirt, sur. Mahse Twiggs done cut both sleeves out an' gin 'em to Mister Doctor Baldwin, but I's got de body part on me yit."

"Well, shuck it off and bring it here," Fulton ordered, and Cæsar proceeded to obey.

When the wounded man had been helped to the place by David's side in the bottom of the wagon and had drained the last drop in Cæsar's whiskey flask, they moved on. It seemed an interminable journey to David. His shoulder felt like red-hot iron with blistering throbs in it. The moon had risen, and turning his head he could make out the wan features of the man at his side.

A second wounded soldier was helped to a seat in the tail of the wagon, Captain Fulton tramping behind. Then they stopped again and two more of the dreary procession were taken up while Cæsar walked at the horse's head.

"Twiggs and Gordon are coming, David," Captain Fulton called cheerily, as they moved along. "I hear Twiggs whistling. He whistles like a mocking-bird with all its heart in its throat. 'For bonnie Annie Laurie I'd

lay me down and dee' — sounds as if he would gladly lay him down and dee — the rascal! He's about the most heartless young whelp I know. Can you hear him?"

David heard only to well, and the wish was born in his heart that Jack's sword had pierced his heart instead of his shoulder.

CHAPTER III

MISS DOROTHY CLINTON

"FATHER, I have come home."

Miss Dorothy Clinton stood in the door of her father's study holding back the portière with one hand. She belonged to that variety of visions which is said to make a young man glad he is living and an old man wish he were young. At the sound of her voice Senator Clinton, seated at his desk, glanced up, then rose to his feet — the next instant she was in his arms.

"Are you angry with me for coming back to you?" she asked.

"Angry with you, my dear child," he answered, kissing her. Then he held her out at arm's length and gazed earnestly into her face. "You could never do anything that would make me angry. Certainly not in coming back to me! I wished you to go abroad, because I thought you would enjoy it, not because I did not want you with me."

"I did enjoy it very much, but I couldn't be happy, knowing that Jack was in danger and that you were here working alone. I just had to come back, to work with you, father, and to be near Jack. Grandmother — I spent last night with her in New York — showed me Jack's letter written after the battle near Antietam creek. I thank God he escaped unhurt."

"We have much to be thankful for, my dear," Senator Clinton said reverently. "After many reverses the Lord has given our army a great victory."

"Ah, but they say it was dearly bought, father. On the train I talked with a lady who was on her way to join Miss Dix and her band of nurses. She had received a letter from Miss Dix written the day after the battle.

She let me read it. The slaughter was terrible, the letter said. In one field, where the wheat had been garnered and the land plowed for a new crop, the bodies were so thick as almost to cover the ground, and in a sunken road — she called it the Bloody Lane — they lay in heaps, Northerners and Southerners together. Oh, it must be horrible — horrible! Suppose Jack or some of our friends had been there." She shivered and covered her face with her hands.

"Yes," Senator Clinton admitted, as he led her to the sofa and drew her down to a seat at his side. "The slaughter was terrible. It is estimated that in that one day's fight alone, our army lost upwards of twelve thousand, besides the wounded and missing, and they think the rebel loss was even greater."

"Have you heard from — them?" she asked breathlessly. "From Aunt Beverly and Margaret?"

"No, I never hear except when I send your aunt the dividends from her New York stocks and bonds. The last time I sent it in gold by a messenger under a flag of truce, and knowing that prices had risen enormously in Richmond, owing to the blockade of the Southern ports, I added a small sum — only a few hundred dollars. She returned it and wrote that she could accept nothing from one who was doing all in his power to murder her son and subjugate her country."

"That was downright mean in Aunt Beverly, father," Dorothy cried, her eyes flashing. "Indeed, it was. You did it in kindness and she had no right to insult you."

"She feels very keenly that Jack is in the Northern army and that I am working on the Sanitary Commission, my dear. She expected us, if we couldn't fight for the South, at least to remain neutral."

"I don't care," Dorothy persisted. "You have a right to your opinion. You must act according to your own conscience, not according to hers. She had no right to insult you."

Senator Clinton regarded her with kindling eyes. If there had ever been any doubt in his mind about her parentage, there could be none now. She was not only

strikingly like her mother in face and figure, but she had inherited her fiery independence when aroused.

"When did you last see mamma and papa?" Dorothy asked, interrupting his revery. "Mamma wrote me how good you had been to her."

"Good to her, my dear! Nothing I could ever do would compensate Mrs. Herrick for her care of you. She is a noble woman. She not only devotes her time to nursing in the hospitals but she has converted her little house into a home — she has named it for you, the 'Annie Laurie Refuge' — for the wives and mothers of soldiers who come to Washington seeking their loved ones in the hospitals or on the battlefields. Many of them arrive here weary and heartbroken and without money. She takes them all in. Her house is always full, so I invited her and Mr. Herrick to make this place their home and come here at any hour."

"Ah, that was good of you, father," Dorothy exclaimed, kissing him. "I am sure they appreciate it."

"I have the rooms set apart for them but they seldom make use of them. Mrs. Herrick spends her nights as well as her days in the hospitals, or nursing some sick woman in her little refuge, while Mr. Herrick, for almost a year now, has slept in the White House that he may be within easy call of the President."

"How devoted he has always been to Mr. Lincoln!" Dorothy remarked, smiling.

"I can readily understand his devotion, my dear. Mr. Herrick is not only a sincere abolitionist, but an intensely patriotic man. The loss of his arm incapacitates him for work in the field, so, in serving the President faithfully, he feels that he is doing his share towards destroying slavery and preserving the Union. I did not vote for Mr. Lincoln — indeed, I considered his election almost as great a calamity as did the people of the South — but, now that the wonderful qualities of his mind, his strict integrity and his all-embracing charity have been proved, I have come to look upon his election as providential. This has been a year of deep gloom, for our army has met with many disasters, but I sincerely

believe that if the country will uphold Mr. Lincoln he will pull us out of the ditch and the Union will be restored. How do they regard him abroad?"

"In Paris and London they find fault with him for annulling the emancipation proclamations of General Fremont and General Hunter, and for trying to induce Congress to appropriate money to pay for the slaves. They say he is more afraid of offending the slave power than ever Buchanan was. It does seem to me, father, that he has receded from his former position on slavery."

"Have you seen President Lincoln's reply to Horace Greeley's open letter, 'The Prayer of Twenty Millions'?" he asked.

Dorothy shook her head and Senator Clinton, crossing the room, took a scrapbook from the case.

"Greeley has been the most annoying of the President's critics," he explained. "Last August, soon after the President's call for three hundred thousand troops and when the whole country was oppressed by the deepest gloom, Greeley issued his prayer in the 'New York Tribune.' He said that the Union cause had suffered materially from Lincoln's efforts to conciliate the slave power and that the administration seemed much more anxious to uphold slavery than to put down the rebellion. In behalf of twenty million patriots he demanded that the President should execute the laws of the land, more especially the Confiscation Act. Here is the President's reply. I will read you what he says about slavery and the preservation of the Union."

He moved nearer the window and settled the glasses more firmly on his nose. He was a tall, distinguished looking man with prematurely gray hair. Dorothy, looking at him, was struck by his evident cheerfulness, as compared with the years when she had known him only as Jack's father. She did not realize that the change was caused by her presence.

"'As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt,'" Senator Clinton read. "'I would save the Union. I would save it in the shortest way under the Constitution.

If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help the Union.' "

" Ah, but that is just what they say it will do, father," Dorothy exclaimed. " They say in Paris and London that if he will emancipate the slaves England and France will never recognize the rebels. They think us all barbarians as long as we encourage the slave-owners."

" I think we can trust Mr. Lincoln to judge the condition of the country, as well as the gossips of Paris and London, my dear," Senator Clinton replied, smiling at her evident wish to have her country appear well in the eyes of the world. " The President annulled the proclamations of Fremont and Hunter because he thought them untimely, not because he wished to perpetuate or protect slavery."

" Then you think he will emancipate the slaves when the time comes? "

" He would have issued a proclamation for their emancipation the twenty-second of last July, had it not been considered untimely by Secretary Seward and several other members of his Cabinet. Mr. Seward — "

" That's it, father, in London and Paris they say he is entirely under the thumbs of Mr. Seward and Mr. Stanton — that they are the executive head of our government — that Mr. Lincoln spends his time receiving petty office-seekers and telling dirty jokes."

Senator Clinton's face flushed perceptibly and there was a decided pause before he answered.

" My dear," he said, and his voice reminded Dorothy

of Jack's when Margaret used to persist in saying or doing perverse things. "My dear, I have known Mr. Lincoln intimately now for a year. I have heard him tell many stories but never one that could not with all propriety have been told in a drawing-room in a conversation with ladies. As for his being dominated by Seward or Stanton — " Senator Clinton smiled. "Nobody dominates Abraham Lincoln. While he will listen to advice from the humblest citizen, and act on it if in his judgment it is best, nobody dominates him. He considered Secretary Seward's advice wise, — that he wait for our army to gain a victory before issuing the order of emancipation, — so he accepted it. The battle of Antietam is our first victory. If — "

"You think he will do it now? "

"I only know that he has been waiting for a victory, and a victory has at last been won. There was a Cabinet meeting this morning. I have an appointment with the President in a few minutes and he may make some reference to — "

"An appointment with the President." Dorothy sprang up from the sofa. "Oh, father, let me go with you! It has been such a long time since I have seen the President, and he was always so kind to me."

"Yet you joined the ranks of the fault-finders, blaming him for something you could not understand."

"Oh, no, father, indeed I was not," Dorothy shook her head most positively. "I wasn't finding fault with him — I only thought it strange that he doesn't do what everybody says is right."

CHAPTER IV

AN EPOCH IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY

SEPTEMBER twenty-second, in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-two, at the very moment that Miss Dorothy Clinton stopped in the door of her father's study and announced the fact that she had returned home, President Lincoln in the White House, just across Lafayette Square, took his seat at the southern end of the long table that occupied the centre of that rather dark chamber immediately over the Green Room. Every member of his cabinet was present. When they had all taken their places and after a few words of general conversation, the President, with mirth lurking in the dark corners of his eyes, produced a small book.

" Here is a present which was sent me the other day," said he. " Artemus Ward complimented me with a copy of his latest production. I don't know when I have laughed as much as I did over one of the chapters, — ' High Handed Outrage in Utica.' I will read it to you and see if you don't agree with me."

He wiped his glasses, put them comfortably on his nose, and began to read.

" ' In the Faul of 1856, I showed my sho in Utiky, a trooly grate sitty in the State of New York.' " Here the President, with a quizzical smile, glanced over the tops of his glasses at his Secretary of State, then went on.

" ' 1 day as I was givin a descripshun of my Beests and Snaiks in my usual flowry stile what was my skorn & disgust to see a big burly feller walk up to the cage containin my wax figgers of the Lord's Last Supper, and cease Judas Iscarrot by the feet and drag him out on the ground. He then commenced fur to pound him as hard as he cood. " What under the sun are you abowt? "

cried I. Sez he, "What did you bring this pussy-lanermus cuss here fur?" and he hit the wax figger another tremenjis blow on the hed. Sez I, "You egrejus ass, that air's a wax figger — a representation of the false 'Postle." Sez he, "That's all very well for you to say, but I tell you, old man, that Judas Iscarrot can't show hisself in Utiky with impunity by a darn site!" with which observation he kaved in Judassis hed. I sood him, and the Joory brawt in a verdick of Arson in the 3d degree.'"

Everybody laughed — laughed as heartily as the President himself — except the second gentleman at his right. The face of Secretary Stanton was immovable; he did not smile. After the first burst of merriment President Lincoln's expression became exceedingly grave.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I have, as you are aware, thought a great deal about the relation of this war with slavery; and you all remember that several weeks ago, I read to you an order which I had prepared on the subject. The rebel army is now driven out of Maryland and I am going to fulfil the promise I made to myself, and" — he hesitated slightly — "to my God, to issue that proclamation emancipating the slaves. I have got you together to hear what I have written down. I do not wish your advice about the main matter, for that I have determined for myself."

He took up the few loose sheets of paper which he had placed on the table at his elbow, and read from them:

"On the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, henceforward, and forever, free."

Simple, straightforward words, they were — words that were to settle for all time the meaning of our Constitution and to mark an epoch in the progress of mankind.

There was a short discussion over a phrase or two but

none on a principle; about that they were all agreed. So passed the brief Cabinet meeting which will stand forever as a milestone in the history of our country.

As the President stepped from the Cabinet room into the passageway, Senator Clinton and Dorothy stopped to speak to the old doorkeeper seated at the head of the stair. A group of ladies being shown through the house were sauntering down the hall. One carried a beautiful bunch of flowers. On catching sight of Mr. Lincoln she tripped forward exclaiming:

"Ah, Mr. President, I am so glad to see you; I want to present you with this bouquet of flowers."

Dorothy gasped. What would the President do, how could he extricate himself?

Without the slightest discomposure he greeted the lady cordially, took the flowers, and, then, looking from them into her sparkling eyes and radiant face, said with a gallantry that Chesterfield himself might have envied:

"Really, madam, if you give them to me, and they are mine, I think I cannot possibly make so good use of them as to present them to you in return."

A warm color flamed up into Dorothy's face. How could those people, calling themselves Americans, whom she had met in Paris and London, speak of him as a ci-devant rail-splitter and flatboatman, and describe him as being uncouth and half-civilized? She wished with all her heart that they might have been there to see their slanders proved false.

"I was afraid you had got lost in the crowd in the ante-room, so I came out to hunt you up," President Lincoln said, as he greeted Senator Clinton. He was holding Dorothy's little hand between both his own. Now he smiled down into her face. "So you have come back to your own country, have you? I hoped you would."

"She says she enjoyed Paris and London, Mr. President, but she had to come back to take a hand in this war," Senator Clinton explained, and his pleasure was unmistakable.

"Well, I can think of no more beautiful trait for a girl

than love of home," Mr. Lincoln replied, but the girl did not hear.

Down the hall, from the same door through which the President had made his appearance, came the figure of a one-armed man. With a little cry of gladness Dorothy ran forward and threw her arms around his neck.

"Yes, there is a trait more beautiful," said Mr. Lincoln, his eyes suffused with tears as he watched her. "It is gratitude." He turned to Senator Clinton and extended his hand. "I want to congratulate you on having such a lovely daughter. She is lovelier even than I thought she was."

"She is exactly like her mother," Senator Clinton replied, and his voice was a little husky. "Every day that I see her the likeness grows more strong."

"Your mother will be rejoiced to see you, Laurie, she has —" Mr. Herrick hesitated. Then he turned apologetically to Senator Clinton. "It is hard to remember her new name, sir, and to forget that she once belonged to us."

"I hope you will never forget, Mr. Herrick," the gentleman replied cordially. "We are on our way to see Mrs. Herrick; where shall we find her?"

"She has been dividing her time this week between the Circle Hospital and the Annie Laurie Refuge, but I had a message from her this morning saying they needed nurses out at Harewood for some particularly bad cases just received from the Antietam battlefield, so she was going out there. It's a long way out — on the Seventh Street road," he explained to Dorothy. "I can send —"

"Then we'll all go out to see her," President Lincoln interrupted. "I wanted to go over some letters relating to the new line of work proposed by the Sanitary Commission with you," he said to Senator Clinton. "But that can wait. I will steal the afternoon from myself and we will all go out to Harewood. You can turn your work over to another messenger, Herrick. We must —"

"I'm afraid I'll have to get you to excuse me, Mr.

President," Mr. Herrick replied respectfully. "There are several important pieces of business which — "

"Herrick is a reproach to me, Clinton," Mr. Lincoln said, placing his hand affectionately on the shoulder of his chief messenger. "He never throws away his time, he always does his duty and — "

"No, no, don't say that, Mr. President. It is not throwing away your time going to see those poor wounded men. If you will excuse me, sir, I will say it is your duty. From what I hear, a good part of them will be gone before to-morrow and it would be a great comfort to them to know that the President cares enough about them to drive out there to see them." He turned to Senator Clinton. "My wife says there's no medicine that does as much good in a hospital ward as a visit from the President."

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "you have made out a pretty good case for me, but what have you got to say for yourself?"

"That Dick Hayden is off on sick leave, Mr. President, and John has gone to the hospital to see his son — it's a case of gangrene, sir, and they say he can't last through the night. I made John go, so if Mr. Stanton — "

Mr. Lincoln threw up his hands.

"If Stanton has anything to do with it, I'll give it up!" he exclaimed, and he met Dorothy's quick glance with a quizzical expression. "Whatever you do, Herrick, don't let the Secretary of War find out that I tried to toll you off. Come on, my dear," he said, taking Dorothy's arm. "Stanton may be sending an extra bundle of papers over for me to sign. He doesn't like to see idlers standing around this house."

When the carriage drove up both gentlemen tried to make Dorothy take her place on the back seat but she positively refused.

"I'm going to sit where I can see you both," she persisted, taking her seat with her back to the driver.

The change in the national city was marked. Instead of the gaudily dressed staff officers and orderlies whom Dorothy had seen the year before, dashing so gaily about

the streets, there were a few serious looking couriers in faded uniforms, who, while they kept their horses at a good pace, moved sedately, sparing both man and beast. The soldiers whom they passed on the streets bore the stamp of battlefields and hospitals. Their faces were pale and haggard from suffering, some had bandaged heads, others empty sleeves, and a few were taking unsteady steps on new wooden legs. It seemed to Dorothy that every other house was a hospital and she wondered that her father and President Lincoln could keep track of them all. Provost guards were to be seen at every turn and one, not recognizing the President's carriage, called sharply to the driver to halt.

"I guess in London and Paris, they think we are having a right sharp little quarrel over here," Mr. Lincoln said to Dorothy, after they had reached the country road. "And they feel pretty sure the South will whip us."

"Yes, Mr. President, they say the South will undoubtedly win, and —" Dorothy hesitated, flushing a little, but her eyes looked steadily into his. "They say the North is losing because you will not emancipate the slaves."

"Foreigners are in great error about this government," Mr. Lincoln replied thoughtfully. "They seem to think that the moment I was elected President I had the power to abolish slavery, forgetting that before I could have any power whatever, I had to take the oath to support the Constitution of the United States and execute the laws as I found them. The paramount idea of the Constitution is the preservation of the Union. It is not specified in so many words, but that it was the idea of the founders is evident, for without the Union the Constitution would be worthless. It seems clear, that in the last extremity, if any State institution threatens the existence of the Union, the President could not hesitate to do his duty. In our case it seems that the moment has come when slavery must die that the nation may live; for that reason I have issued a proclamation of emancipation."

" You have issued it, Mr. President? " Dorothy cried, and Senator Clinton bent forward interested.

" Yes," Mr. Lincoln replied, " that was the reason for my Cabinet meeting to-day. The proclamation will be published to-morrow, so I don't mind owning up."

" Oh, I'm so glad — I'm so glad! " the girl exclaimed, clasping her hands.

" Oh, you little traitor, you," Mr. Lincoln shook his finger playfully at her. " You were among the doubters; I saw it in your eyes. Now that your father, — " he placed his hand affectionately on Senator Clinton's knee, — " that he should wait for me to prove myself seems natural, but you, my friend at first, to fall away from me — what shall I do with you? "

" Just what you will do with the other rebels when they come to realize their duty and lay down their arms, Mr. President, — forgive me." Dorothy laughed merrily, reassured by his manner.

" Yes, that is about all that is left for me to do, I reckon," the President replied. " But you mustn't let those Southern relatives of yours know I said so."

Harewood was a makeshift hospital of rough wards and tents. It had been the barns and out-buildings on a farm near the Soldiers' Home. When the President's carriage drove up, Mrs. Herrick was near the entrance. She was fanning and consoling a young nurse who had fainted at the sight and smell of the wards. After her first embrace of Dorothy Mrs. Herrick turned to Mr. Lincoln.

" Oh, Mr. President, you've answered my prayer to-day. When the surgeons and dressers finished and we made the rounds with nourishment — making the poor fellows as comfortable as we could — I said to myself, if the President will only come to-day it will be a God-send."

At the door of one of the wards she stopped Dorothy.

" Don't go in there, dearie," she objected. " Those are the worst cases. The surgeon says he doesn't believe there will be a man alive in there to-morrow."

The surgeon's voice, speaking just within the door, came to them.

" This is a young rebel, Mr. President. He was wearing uniform trousers — some of our captured supplies evidently. I have ordered him removed and will see that he is sent to — "

" Now, I don't know about that," was Mr. Lincoln's reply. " He's one of the Nation's children, you know — a spoilt child and in rebellion, but our own flesh and blood for all that. He doesn't look very robust — perhaps if we keep him — "

" Oh, you needn't try that on me;" the wounded rebel opened his eyes brilliant with fever, and glared at Mr. Lincoln. " I'm a Confederate, I fought for the South, and when I get well — it makes no difference whether you send me to prison or coddle me here among your own men — I shall fight for the South again."

" Mamma," Dorothy cried, " who is that? Who is that? "

" Why, dearie, — " Mrs. Herrick began.

Dorothy did not wait to hear. She whisked through the door, pressed by the surgeon and her father and slipping under the President's arm dropped down on her knees beside the hospital cot.

" Twiggs — Twiggs," she whispered.

The wounded man gazed into her eyes for an instant; then the look of pain and irritation slipped away from his face.

" Why, honey darling," he said. " Did Abe Lincoln pull you down from the sky? "

CHAPTER V

THE SOUTH'S REPLY

WHEN the newspapers containing President Lincoln's proclamation freeing the slaves reached the Army of Northern Virginia, David, promoted from the ranks, was a lieutenant in the 16th Georgia, Tom Cobb's brigade. He read the proclamation, returned the paper without comment to its owner, then went for a long walk through the woods. On his return he still made no comment but plunged at once into the work of drilling and preparing his company. Day after day he kept at it in grim determination. There seemed to be no tiring him out. Colonel Goode Bryan watched him approvingly and spoke to General Cobb.

"I'll have one man at least to recommend for promotion after the next battle," he said. "Lieutenant David Hamilton has fighting blood in his veins and since Lincoln issued his emancipation proclamation it has all come on top. If he gets half a chance in the next battle, he'll be heard from."

"I know him," Cobb replied, nodding his head. "He's one of Alec Stephens' boys. He was severely wounded at Bull Run. Colonel Hazard told me that he fought like a fiend. I'll see that he gets a chance."

It was about this time that Twiggs interrupted Dorothy, who was reading that morning's paper to him.

"So they've issued another order freeing our slaves, have they?" he exclaimed inquiringly. One arm was still in splints and there was an ugly half-healed wound in his side which made the surgeon strict in his orders to Dorothy to keep him quiet and flat on his back. "Well, if it makes your generals feel any more important to try to play the dictator, we won't mind, I reckon. Who is it

this time, Ben Butler or Billy Rosecrans? They say Grant and Sherman have got too much sense and McClellan is too near Lincoln. Which one of your military geniuses is trying to lay down the law in an unconquered country, honey darling? "

Dorothy, remembering the surgeon's caution, tried to think of some means of escape, but Twiggs' eyes were fastened on her and she had to answer.

" President Lincoln issued this last order freeing the slaves, Twiggs. It is really only a warning to the South and will not take effect until next January."

"It was kind of him to give us warning," Twiggs replied, with fine sarcasm. " Doubtless the South will appreciate his thoughtfulness and throw down arms at once." They were in one of the front rooms on the second floor of Senator Clinton's Washington home. It was a warm sunny day in October and through the open window across Lafayette Square he could see the peak of the White House portico and the flag flying above it. He lay for sometime silently gazing at it. Finally he said, " Will you please get me a copy of the President's proclamation, Laurie? "

" I'll have to hunt it — I may have to send to the street — I — really I'm not sure I know where — "

Twiggs regarded her smiling.

" Oh, I expect you will find one quite handy in your father's study if not in your own sitting-room. Suppose you look in your own room first," he suggested maliciously.

" But you don't want it now; it's very stupid reading," she objected.

" Will you be good enough to step out of the room for a few minutes, please? " his voice was the quintessence of courtesy.

" What are you going to do? You know the surgeon said — "

" Oh, just as you please. Of course I shall have to tell Uncle Clinton that I requested you to leave the room and you refused." He thrust out one bare foot and began to gather the coverlet around him.

"Oh — no, Twiggs," she cried, and she put her hand on his breast to hold him down.

His eyes grew brilliant, almost merry, but the expression of his mouth and chin was very stern indeed.

"Will you get the proclamation for me?" he demanded.

"But what do you want with it? Why do you care?" she questioned in real distress. Then a new thought flashed into her mind and her cheeks became the color of a damask rose. "You said once — you'd set them all free if — if I'd —"

He put his hand over hers, holding it firmly against his breast.

"So I did, darling, and I'll do it this very hour if you will say you love me well enough to become my wife. I will do anything in the world you wish — except —" his eyes went past her like a man gazing at something a great way off — "except give up the South."

"That is exactly what Margaret required of Jack. I think you should be willing to do as much for — for me." It was neither wise nor honorable, but she had to keep up the argument and change the tenor of his thoughts.

He was watching her steadily. Her face seemed on fire and her eyes refused to meet his gaze. With a deep fluttering sigh he relinquished her hand and motioned her away from him.

"You are playing with me, Laurie," he said, and he turned his face from her. "If I were well and strong maybe I would punish you as I used to do when we were children, — the day we were making your piano feel at home. I know you too well, dear, you can't deceive me. If you loved me, you would not hide your face from me." He was staring straight up at the ceiling and a deep line cut his forehead between the brows. Dorothy turned away mute. She could not contradict him and there seemed nothing to say. She walked over to the window and stood staring down into the square. Across, in the far corner, she could see a company of raw recruits being put through their first drill. The people streaming in

and out of the War Office looked like children. Presently there came one who towered above all the others; he had the figure and awkward movements of an overgrown boy. The girl in the window watched him with kindling eyes. Turning towards the White House he stopped on the corner to speak to a woman and child. Then Dorothy saw him take his seat on the low stone coping; it looked as if he were sitting on the ground. As he arose he handed the woman a fluttering slip of paper. Tears of sympathy welled up in the eyes of the girl in the window. She knew that Abraham Lincoln had lifted the burden from the heart of another woman. When Twiggs spoke to her, she started as if from a dream.

"Tell me," said he. He had turned his head and was watching her intently. "Why did you throw David over?"

In an instant she seemed transfigured.

"Why did *I* throw *him* over! You make a mistake. I hadn't that privilege," she answered. "It was your friend Mr. David Hamilton — or is he a Colonel or a Brigadier General? It was he who threw *me* over. I was putting on my wedding garments when his note came, declining to marry the daughter of an abolitionist."

"Declining to marry you!" Twiggs stared at her in blank astonishment. "Oh, I don't believe it," he cried indignantly. "I don't believe it. There has been some terrible mistake. David never wrote such a letter. I would swear — "

But Dorothy had flitted from the room. He heard her cross the hall and enter the room opposite. In a few moments she was coming back.

"Here is my proof," she said, handing him an open letter. "You can see for yourself."

Twiggs read it through; then he turned it over and stared at the blank side of the sheet. Then he turned it back and read again.

"He is a scoundrel, after all," he muttered. "He lied to me. He told me that you threw him over and let me think it was because of the change of your cir-

cumstances — because you had money." He hesitated, staring at her his brows knotted into a frown. "You didn't tell Jack or Uncle Clinton, why?" he asked.

Dorothy glanced at him, then her lashes fluttered down on her hot cheeks.

"I couldn't. I was — ashamed — " Her voice choked and Twiggs, putting out his hand impulsively, caught hers and pressed it to his lips. He said nothing, and after a little she went on. "I begged mamma and papa never to mention it to anybody, except President and Mrs. Lincoln. They had to be told, for they were expecting me to come to tell them good-by. They were very good to me. Mrs. Lincoln drove over at once and took me back to the White House with her. She wanted me to stay for a long visit, but Jack came. It was that day he found out who I was, you know. He wanted to take me at once to father, so we left that night for New York."

There was a long silence. Twiggs was holding her hand against his cheek. At length he asked:

"Why do you keep his letter?"

Pulling away from him, she stood up.

"That I may be sure it really happened. It is so unlike David, so unreal that sometimes when I wake up at night I cannot believe it. It seems like a terrible dream. Then I get up and read his letter and — " She put her hands up to her forehead and pressed her forehead as though in physical pain. "Oh, I can't explain — I could never make you understand."

Twiggs drew her gently back to her seat beside the bed.

"Never mind, sweetheart," he said. "You don't need to explain; I do understand. I understand perfectly." When she had become more composed he said to her, "Please bring me a candle?"

Dimly wondering at his strange request she lit a candle and brought it to him. He placed it on the little table beside the bed and thrust David's letter into the flame.

"Oh, Twiggs," she cried. "Oh, Twiggs, —"

He dropped the burning paper into the bowl of the candle and caught her fluttering hands.

"I had to do it, dear," he told her soothingly. "I can't allow you to warp your life and blight the beautiful years before you. Come sit down, sweetheart. You must promise me never to waste another thought on the scoundrel. He is not worth it."

Some little time passed before he broke the silence that fell between them.

"Please, dear," he begged. "Get me Mr. Lincoln's proclamation."

Dorothy looked at him startled; then a smile broke over her face like a ray of April sunshine.

"How tantalizing you are," she said. "I thought you had forgotten."

"Forgotten Lincoln's proclamation freeing our slaves!" He shook his head. "I couldn't forget that. We — you and I — and that," pointing to David's charred letter, "are trivial incidents, foot-prints on the sand. Lincoln's proclamation and those two armies out there, facing each other, are the real things. They are making history."

Before giving him the newspaper she took her seat and spoke to him very seriously.

"It is not mentioned in this paper, dear, but Mr. Lincoln has asked Congress to appropriate four hundred millions of dollars to pay for the slaves in those states that lay down their arms before the first of next January."

"What a pity your Congress is not as generous as your President." There was no mistaking the sarcasm in Twiggs' tone.

The color in the girl's cheeks deepened and her eyes flashed.

"Your own party defeated it. The Democrats voted against the bill." Then she added more gently, "But if the Southern States would come back into the Union — they would have a majority in the House — then it would pass. I am sure President Lincoln would use all

his influence for the South. Oh, you don't know how anxious he is to end the war."

"It's a very simple matter. If Mr. Lincoln will let us alone, we will certainly pay him the same compliment *We* are fighting for independence, not for conquest."

"Ah, but he can't let go, Twiggs. He swore to obey the Constitution — he just has to preserve the Union. If you only understood President Lincoln — "

Twiggs laughed. "Shucks!" he exclaimed. "You are just like Margaret. *She* says if people only understood Jeff Davis. A woman never considers the principle involved; it is always the man. Abe Lincoln and Jeff Davis! Wouldn't there be a picnic if you and Margaret got together."

When he had read the emancipation proclamation, he turned his face to the wall, clutching the newspaper convulsively in his thin fingers.

"Twiggs, dear," Dorothy began in gentle reproach. "You know I promised the surgeon — "

He turned and smiled up into her anxious face.

"You needn't worry. I shall do nothing to retard my recovery. An hour ago I might have been careless, but now — " He laughed softly. "My life belongs to my country. I must get back to the front. If God spares Stonewall Jackson, Abe Lincoln will have to put up a mighty tough fight before he deprives the South of its rights. To-night I shall ask your father to have me exchanged."

Two weeks later they stood together in her father's study and Twiggs was holding her hand as he said goodby.

"I can't ask you to promise me now, Laurie, for my life belongs to the Confederacy, but when this war is over, if God spares me and you are still free, I shall ask you again to be my wife. I shall try to be worthy of you, darling, and do all, that an honest man can, to win your heart."

CHAPTER VI

WHEN THEY ALL SANG ANNIE LAURIE

FROM the battle of Antietam to the end of the war affairs progressed by leaps and bounds, each bound marked by a battle, with a blurred succession of skirmishes between. It was soon after that fight, famous because it gave President Lincoln the longed-for opportunity to issue his emancipation proclamation, that the Army of the Potomac changed commanders for the third time. When the news that General Burnside had been appointed to succeed General McClellan reached the Confederate headquarters at Culpepper Court House General Lee smiled quizzically as he remarked to General Longstreet:

"I am sorry to hear of that change," said he. "McClellan and I always understood each other. I'm afraid, if the authorities in Washington continue to make these changes, they will find some one whom I do not understand."

When this remark reached the soldiers as they sat about their camp-fires, munching their rations of parched corn and salt pork or mending their rawhide moccasins, they chuckled with glee at the sly wit of their beloved leader.

"The next fight will prove Mahse Robert understands Ginral Burnside 'bout's well as he did Little Mac, I reckon," one private assured his mess.

Another added, "Thar won't be nary hair ner hide left of that thar Gran' Army of the Potomic when Mahse Robert gits through studyin' Burnside. Reckon, some of you-all pickets'd better tell them Yanks 'cross the river t' say their prayers befo' the next fight."

That next fight is now called the best fought battle

of the war from a Southern standpoint. In it five thousand Confederates held Marye's Hill against forty thousand and added double their number to the enemy's list of killed and wounded. It was there that the 16th Georgia was given its chance. After that battle David received his commission as captain.

The next bound came on the last of the same year. The South rejoiced over a victory at Murfreesboro only to become indignant four days later when General Bragg retreated, leaving the field to General Rosecrans. The battle of Chancellorsville soon followed, but in spite of a great success the Confederacy bowed her head in an agony of woe — her dearly beloved son, Stonewall Jackson, lay dying.

Shortly after this it became known in Richmond that General Lee was moving north. At the same time it was whispered that Jeb Stuart and his cavalry were off on another wonderful raid. Though nobody would speak positively of their destination, Washington was frequently mentioned in that connection. With such a succession of brilliant victories no one could doubt the success of either Lee or Stuart. Certainly those who had faith in the Southern cause felt no misgivings. They believed their army unconquerable and were convinced that God was fighting on the side of the Confederacy. Although flour was selling for a hundred dollars a barrel and Richmond was crowded with wounded soldiers and homeless refugees, every heart was buoyant with hope, every face smiled.

It was the flood tide of the Southern Confederacy.

In the Union states the outlook was far from cheerful. The hope of restoring the Union was rapidly diminishing and there were no longer volunteers, eager to march against the rebels. When the news came that Lee's army had actually crossed the Potomac and was invading Pennsylvania, the outlook suddenly changed. President Lincoln's call for one hundred thousand soldiers to repel the invaders was responded to immediately. There were volunteers in plenty, and they marched to the front cheering for the Union.

It was at this juncture that all questions concerning the movements of Jeb Stuart's cavalry were definitely settled. The telegraph wires flashed the startling intelligence over the Union states and the whisper ran through the South.

"Rebel cavalry in Chambersburg." "Rebel cavalry before Harrisburg." "Rebel cavalry approaching Baltimore." "Rebel cavalry threatening Washington."

The people in the Confederate states threw up their hats. The people in the Union states trembled and watched with sinking hearts for the daily bulletin, while the inhabitants of Washington again contracted the habit of rushing to their windows, the first thing every morning, to see which flag was floating over the White House.

The next announcement was that General Hooker had succeeded General Burnside in command of the Army of the Potomac, only to be succeeded in turn by General Meade. The Union states took heart; the Confederate states smiled jubilantly and said:

"Lincoln is still hunting for a man to beat Lee. Wait until after the next battle, and he'll hunt again."

During the last days of June, the country — Union and Confederate — knew that the two armies were massing on the hills around Gettysburg.

On the first day of that July the most momentous battle of the war began.

That night there was gloom in the headquarters of the Union army. The man to defeat Lee had not yet proved his ability.

The second day the Confederates were again successful. The gloom over the little house on the Taneytown road, which served as General Meade's headquarters, culminated in the calling of a council of war.

It was while this consultation between the Union generals was in progress that General Jeb Stuart, with half a dozen young cavalry officers, dashed up to the Confederate headquarters across the hills and dismounted. As they came within the flare of the campfires and were recognized by the group of officers stand-

ing near General Lee's tent, Colonel David Hamilton, on the staff of the commanding general, started forward eagerly to meet them.

"Why, Twiggs," he cried, extending his hand impulsively. "I have —" He stopped dumbfounded. The young cavalryman was eyeing him insolently, looking him over from his head to his heels, then back to his head again.

"What do you mean, Twiggs?" David demanded. He almost stuttered, he was so taken back by his friend's unusual behavior. "What is the matter with you?"

Captain Twiggs Beverly slipped off his gauntlet.

"Since you ask the question, Colonel Hamilton," he answered, with elaborate courtesy, "I reply." And he struck David full in the face with his bare hand.

There was a rush forward. A dozen pair of hands caught both young officers and proceeded to drag them away from each other, though after the first blow neither of them stirred. In the midst of the confusion General Lee stepped from the door of his tent.

"Gentlemen," he said, and instantly every man was attentive. "This is no time for quarreling among friends. The South needs the services of every one of her sons."

Captain Beverly's manner was irreproachable.

"That is not within my power to decide, General Lee," he replied.

David was silent. His face showed deadly pale in the flickering light of the campfires. For a moment he stood with his chin well up, staring with level eyes at Twiggs. Then he shook himself free from the restraining hands of the officers and turning to General Lee saluted.

"I will wait until — after the war. I give you my word, General Lee." Then he saluted again and, turning, walked quickly off into the night.

It was well past midnight when General Hancock accompanied by General Gibbon and Captain Jack Clinton left the headquarters of the Union army. As they rode across the hills towards the campfires of the Second Corps General Hancock said to Jack:

"General Meade has determined to stay on the field and fight it out, Captain."

"I am very glad to hear it, General," Captain Clinton replied, and there could be no doubt of his sincerity.

"General Meade thinks the attack will be made on our front," Gibbon stated. Hancock turned to him inquiringly and Jack spurred his horse and pushed up nearer. "Just as the council broke up," Gibbon went on, "Meade said to me, 'If Lee attacks to-morrow it will be on your front. He has attacked both our flanks and failed. I have been studying Lee. If he concludes to try again, it will be on our centre!'"

"If he does, we will defeat him." Hancock's voice was determined. "The Second Corps was pretty well banged up yesterday but we gave the rebels their share. We are better equipped and have more men. In the second fight we win."

"They have been reinforced, General," Jack told them. "Jeb Stuart's cavalry has arrived."

"What makes you think so?" both Hancock and Gibbon questioned.

"Do you hear that singing?" Jack pointed towards the left.

The two generals drew in their horses and listened.

On their right from across the hills and softened by the distance, there came the boom of a bursting shell; nearer, the occasional explosion of a musket mingled with the noises of the camp. From their left came the sounds of camp, but through and above there floated across the valley the voices of half a score of men singing, galloping as they sang,

"'If you want to have a good time, jine the cavalry.'"

"Hear that tenor leading?" Jack asked. "That's my cousin, Captain Twiggs Beverly, of Jeb Stuart's staff."

"Are you sure?" Hancock questioned.

"Quite sure," the young officer answered, wishing that he were not.

"He has a beautiful voice," Gibbon said.

They had all spoken in subdued voices as though fearing to disturb the singers.

The rollicking song ended, the voices of the singers died away. With an unconscious sigh the trio of Union officers moved on. General Hancock jerked his horse to its haunches.

"Listen," he exclaimed, throwing his arm out to the left. "That tenor is going it alone."

Like the call of a silver bugle Twiggs' voice floated to them in the moonlight.

"Maxwelton's braes are bonnie,
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true,"—

Thousands of voices had joined and were singing with all the hungry pathos of men longing for home.

"Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doon and dee."

Ten thousands swelled the chorus. From Wolf Hill, Seminary Ridge, Round Top, Devil's Den, the Peach Orchard — all before another sunset to receive their baptism of blood — and from thousands of campfires between, the words rolled back,

"And for bonnie Annie Laurie.
I'd lay me doon and dee."

And Pickett's division marching from Chambersburg, heard and took up the refrain,

"And for bonnie Annie Laurie,
I'd lay me doon and dee."

"My God," Hancock muttered. "They are singing together — Union and Rebel together." And he turned his horse and rode slowly back to his tent.

It was a warm night in July but Jack shivered as if from cold. Above all that mighty chorus he heard only that silvery tenor, and Margaret's reproachful face floated in the moonlight before him.

Lying out under the stars on Seminary Ridge David also heard and recognized Twiggs' voice. At last he knew why he had received that blow in the face from the man whom he loved as a brother.

General Lee, brooding over his plans for to-morrow's battle, stopped to listen and detected the heart hunger in the voices of the singers.

"This is a terrible war," he murmured. "Speaking the same tongue, singing the same songs, with the same blood in their veins!"

He turned his face up to the silent stars and there were tears on his cheeks.

CHAPTER VII

THE FLODDEN FIELD OF THE CONFEDERACY

THAT night Jack did not try to sleep. At dawn he saw the first gun fired when the fight on Culp's Hill was renewed. Then a stillness like the silence in a churchyard settled down over the battlefield of Gettysburg.

From the crest of Cemetery Ridge he watched the movements of the Confederate forces more than a mile away on the opposite range of hills. The top of Seminary Ridge seemed swarming with the little gray people, busy placing their guns in positions covering the Union intrenchments. For two miles they planted the hilltops thick with cannon. It was a marvellous display of artillery force. Never before on the American continent had such a sight been witnessed. It looked as though General Lee planned by one mighty effort to wipe the Grand Army of the Potomac out of existence and gain the independence of the South.

As General Hancock and his staff rode along the Union centre, taking a last survey of his second division, General Gibbon joined him.

"Does that mean the assault predicted by Meade, General?" he asked, pointing towards the grim line of Confederate cannon. "Or will they try to hold our line, while their infantry is sent to aid Culp's Hill?"

"Probably an assault," Hancock replied. "They will begin with a heavy cannonade in the hope of crushing our centre, or at least of exhausting our ammunition that their assaulting party may pass that clearing." He indicated the half mile and more of undulating cultivated fields that fell between the two ranges of hills.

"If that's their plan," said Gibbon. "We'll disappoint them. I'll order —"

One,— two spreading orange flames sprang suddenly

from the line of Confederate cannon and two shells swirled hooting across the open field, passed over the Union centre, and buried themselves some fifty yards beyond.

General Gibbon wheeled his horse and waving his hand to his corps commander dashed back toward Cushing's battery.

The Confederate batteries, one hundred and fifty guns, obeying their two signal shots, belched forth in one tremendous roar. The Union batteries were ready for them and eighty cannon thundered their reply. The greatest artillery battle of the war was on and it raged for more than an hour. The sight was magnificent beyond description, the noise appalling. The air itself was a blare of sound. Exploding cannon, shrieking, bursting shells seemed to fill all space.

The armies were like two mighty wild beasts roaring and spitting at each other, preparing for the death grapple. In the Union lines every man, from the commanding general to the privates, felt that this was only the prelude to the real tug of war and they girded themselves for the coming struggle. In the Confederate camp — ah, the whole world knows of General Longstreet's disagreement with his chief.

After nearly two hours the terrific cannonading from the Union lines slackened, then ceased. It was then that Longstreet gave the fatal order.

Out of the smoke-veiled front of Seminary Ridge stepped the double battle-line of the Confederates, fifteen thousand strong. Jauntily, steadily, they moved forward with banners flying, like holiday soldiers on a parade. Down the slope on that clear July afternoon and in full view of their foe, they came. The Union batteries opened and the shrieking shells mowed down the gray line. But on it moved, living men closing up ranks in dead men's places, leaving behind scattered rows of bleeding bundles — the driftwood of a battle.

There is no need to tell of Pickett's charge — how, half way across the field under that pitiless fire, Trimble's division on his right wing staggered and melted away —

"It was the best he could do. It was a choice between that and an unbroke devil. He took the devil. I was going to join my regiment, the 18th Virginia, in the advance, so he ordered me to bring the horse and take you forward."

The cavalryman started forward at a brisk canter and Jack was careful to keep at his side. The whole column was in rapid motion. In spite of the increasing darkness the teams, urged by whip and shout, were trotting over rocky roads. From almost every wagon there issued wails of heart-rending agony.

From some wagons there came only deep moans. In others the wounded men were praying, while in yet others fearful oaths were wrung from them by agony and despair. One man was begging pitifully for water, and Jack could endure it no longer.

"My God," he cried. "Are these teamsters all brutes? Listen to that poor fellow begging for water. Can't he stop and — ?"

"Stop! Be hanged, no! They *must* move on. If a wagon breaks down it must be left by the roadside, if a team gives out it must drop to the rear. Under no circumstances must they stop. Those are their orders. I heard them given."

"Then Lee is retreating."

"Retreating," the cavalryman laughed contemptuously. "He's moving on Baltimore. When he cleans that out, he'll occupy Washington."

Jack thought hard for a moment. He recalled that when retreating from the Chickahominy, and after Chancellorsville, he did not know the Union Army had been defeated but imagined they were marching to victory by another road.

"What are you going to do with me?" he asked.

"I'm ordered to take you to Staunton and put you on the cars."

"And from Staunton?"

"Libby Prison, I reckon," was the cavalryman's cheerful rejoinder.

CHAPTER VIII

A MAN WITHOUT INFLUENCE IN THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT

THE fourth day after Captain Jack Clinton arrived in Libby Prison, Mr. Stephens called to see him. The guard on duty at the prison door, unaware that he was addressed by the Vice-President of the Confederacy, without troubling to turn round pointed over his shoulder with his thumb.

"They've got all the Cap'ns in that thar room. You mought jes' step in an' pick out yourn, I reckon."

So Mr. Stephens stepped in, and in the room full of gaunt haggard prisoners he came face to face with Jack, as he and another officer were escorted out between two guards.

"You should have notified me on coming here, Captain Clinton." Mr. Stephens' tone was a little sharp. He was not only shocked by Jack's pale face and evident suffering but irritated by the coldness with which he replied to his cordial greeting. "Your aunt is in the country, but she would have come in to see you. I received only to-day David's letter, saying you were here. It came by flag of truce from Fortress Monroe."

"Is David a prisoner?" There was no sign of regret. Jack's lack of interest in the fate of the friend, whose first thought had been of his welfare, was unmistakable. Mr. Stephens was further irritated.

"Yes, he was captured a few hours after he saw you. He was riding an unruly horse that bolted with him into your lines. His letter was written immediately on his arrival at Monroe. He particularly asked that I come to see you and do all that I can for your comfort. Of course I have sent a message notifying Mrs. Beverly.

If there is anything that I can do — anything that you — " Mr. Stephens was drawing away, outraged by the young man's too evident indifference.

" I have orders to hang these two prisoners to-day at sundown, Mr. Vice-President," the Confederate officer in charge of Libby Prison said, as he came forward from his desk and greeted Mr. Stephens. " If you know their relatives and can — "

" Hang them at sundown! My God, what for? " Mr. Stephens' irritation was swallowed up in his surprise.

" Here is the order, sir. You will see that General Winder assigns no reason." Captain Turner handed him the order.

Mr. Stephens read the order; then he stared up at the Commander of the prison and his eyes flashed.

" By lot! Do you mean to tell me that without having committed any offence these two Federal officers, prisoners of war, are to be executed — selected by lot? "

" I am a soldier. I must obey orders, Mr. Vice-President," Captain Turner replied respectfully. " These two prisoners drew the black balls. The drawing was fair, as they and all the other prisoners who were here when you entered can testify."

" I don't doubt that, Captain Turner. I don't doubt that. But it must not be. Two prisoners of war — innocent of any crime! It must be stopped, sir. Something must be done to prevent it."

Captain Turner took out his watch.

" It is now a quarter after three, Mr. Vice-President. The sun sets shortly after six," he said.

" Yes, I know. You must give me all the time you can, Captain. That order *must* be countermanded." Mr. Stephens' naturally pale face was flushed; his jaws were sternly set and his eyes shone like burning coals. He put out his hand to Captain Clinton. " You can rely on me, Jack. I will do as much for you as for my own boy — as for David. Don't lose heart, sir," he said, as he wrung the hand of the older prisoner. " I will do all in my power for you. You shall not be hanged."

As the door closed behind him, the commandant of the prison turned to the two doomed officers.

"I hate to discourage you," he said. "Mr. Stephens will do all in his power, — I'm not doubting that, — but he has no influence with the government."

"No influence with the government," the elder prisoner exclaimed hysterically. Then he went on, as though hoping to strengthen his cause by argument. "Why, he's Vice-President. That's next to the President. He's obliged to have influence; he's Vice-President."

"Yes, he's Vice-President — I'm not disputing that — but he has no influence with the government." Captain Turner spoke directly to Jack. "Why, some officers won't be seen speaking to him on the street, for fear of injuring their chances of promotion. While I sincerely hope he will succeed in his efforts to save you, I think it is my duty to advise you to be prepared for the worst."

"Thank you, Captain," Jack said simply, and he smiled faintly as he added, "When I knew Mr. Stephens he was one of the great men in Washington. I knew he opposed secession and gave in only when the State of Georgia seceded, but I didn't know he was without influence in the Confederate government."

"Well, you know Georgia is a pretty unpopular State just now. That hard-headed old fellow, Joe Brown, they've got down there for governor, is always giving the Confederate Government all the trouble he can. They say Brown and Stephens always fight together and that's where the trouble comes in." He glanced from one to the other of the two Federals, as he added, "If there's anything you wish — anything I can do for you not inconsistent with my duties as Commander of this prison, before — " he hesitated, not wishing to pronounce the word that rendered their sentence disgraceful.

"There are a few letters which I should like to write, thank you, Captain, and these bills which you gave me in exchange for my greenbacks" — Jack slipped his hand

into his pocket and drew out a large roll of Confederate money — "I would like to have them divided among the prisoners here who have not heard from their friends at home."

Captain Turner made a gesture of dissent.

"Not yet," he said. "The Vice-President may succeed. Keep them until — we find out."

The commandant had them taken to his own quarters on the first floor of the prison and supplied with the only writing materials at his command, a few pages from an old account book and ink made of oak-balls.

"You will be under guard," he explained. "I am ordered to do that. But you'll be more comfortable and free from annoyance."

About the time that Jack began his letter to Margaret, Mr. Stephens entered the office of the Secretary of War of the Confederate States.

"The Secretary is away, Mr. Vice-President," the Assistant Secretary of War, who was occupying the chair of his chief, told Mr. Stephens. "The matter is entirely beyond my power. The order was given in direct retaliation for the two Confederate officers hung by Burnside. Except the Secretary and the President, no one has the power to countermand it. Secretary Seddon is out of town and will not return for a couple of days. The President? No, he is not in his office. He was going driving with Mrs. Davis this afternoon. They may not have gone; you may be able to catch him. I would advise you to go to the Executive Mansion."

Then the Assistant Secretary turned back to his desk and began a perusal of the papers before him.

The presidential carriage was drawn up before the Executive Mansion but the servant at the door shook his head.

"The President did intend to go driving with his family, Mr. Vice-President," he replied to Mr. Stephens' question. "But he changed his mind. About half an hour ago he left with his secretary for a horseback ride. No, sir, I don't know where they were going but I will try to find out."

It was only a few minutes, but it seemed years to Mr. Stephens as he tramped back and forth through the darkened reception-room. When the servant returned, failure was written on his face. He could only name a half dozen routes that Mr. Davis might have taken.

When the Vice-President re-entered the offices of the Secretary of War, he did so unannounced. The Assistant Secretary was busily writing. Mr. Stephens rested his hands on the front of the desk and spoke.

"Mr. Assistant Secretary," said he, and his voice was calm but his face was terrible to look upon, "I have come back to warn you. If those two Federal officers in Libby Prison are shot, I shall see that you are held personally responsible."

He was entering the private office of the governor of Virginia, when the Assistant Secretary hurried into the outer office.

"Mr. Vice-President," he hastened to say, "I have come to inform you that under the extraordinary power given me in the absence of the Secretary and the President I have dispatched a courier to Libby Prison, giving the two Federal captains under sentence of death a respite of two weeks."

"I pray God he gets there in time," Mr. Stephens said.

CHAPTER IX

AN EYE FOR AN EYE

"DRIVE to the Soldiers Home as fast as you can, Jenkins. I am going to see the President on important business." Miss Dorothy Clinton was speaking to her English groom. She was very pale but perfectly composed and the old groom looked at her with respectful concern as she took her seat in the carriage.

It was a long drive and there was much of interest to be seen on the way, for after the battle of Gettysburg the National capital was one great military hospital. Dorothy saw none of it. She was blind to everything except the two unsealed letters which she held in her hands.

When the carriage drew up in front of the large cottage near the main building of the Soldiers Home where the President and his family spent the warm months of the year, Mrs. Lincoln was seated at one of the front windows on the second floor. She waved her hand and called to Dorothy to come up stairs. The girl shook her head, — she had seen Mr. Lincoln and Tad in the grounds beyond the cottage, talking to an old veteran. The boy was the first to see her and he started forward, running, but the President, catching sight of Dorothy's pale face, called Tad back and sent him off with the old soldier.

Then Mr. Lincoln strode forward and though he greeted her kindly he said almost nothing. He stood silently holding her hand, smiling encouragingly and waiting for her to speak.

"They are from Jack and Alec Stephens, Mr. President," Dorothy said, as she handed him the two letters. "The rebels are going to hang Jack."

"Hang!" It was President Lincoln's eyes that ex-

pressed surprise. He still said nothing, waiting for her to go on.

"If it hadn't been for Mr. Stephens, they would have hanged him the day those letters were written. Mr. Stephens had the execution put off and now he is doing all in his power to have the order countermanded."

"What has Jack done?" President Lincoln spoke quietly and his voice was very kind.

"Oh, nothing, Mr. President, absolutely nothing. It is done in retaliation for the two rebel spies hanged last Spring by General Burnside. Mr. Davis ordered two of the Union captains confined in Libby Prison hung in retaliation. Jack drew one of the black balls. The selection was made by drawing lots."

Mr. Lincoln unfolded Alec Stephens' letter and read it. When he looked up, his eyes had lost a shadow of their trouble.

"I'm glad to see this letter. I'm always glad when a man measures up to the mark I have drawn for him. Stephens has disappointed me in several respects. I'm glad he didn't this time. It's lucky for us that we have him there in Richmond."

"But the authorities of Libby Prison tell Jack that he has no influence with the rebel government, Mr. President."

A sparkle of shrewdness brightened Lincoln's brooding eyes.

"And that's lucky for us too, Laurie. If the rebel government had followed Stephens' advice at the beginning of this war, Abe Lincoln's burden might have been heavier. Yes, it's lucky for us that Stephens has no influence with his government. But while he's working at that end of the line for Jack, we must get to work at ours."

Dorothy looked up at him, her eyes filled with the misery of doubt.

"But what can we do, Mr. President? He is so completely in their power?"

Mr. Lincoln looked down at her, smiling patiently.

"There is always a path out of the woods, my dear, if

we will only take the trouble to find it. We must find this path. God never intended those two brave young soldiers to suffer an ignominious death. We must think of a way to save them."

"There is very little time — the respite is for only two weeks, and one is very nearly gone."

"My dear child," he said, laying his hand on her shoulder. "I will not lose a moment. I will search until I find that path, and the minute I find it I will give your brother back to you. And now, Laurie, I have a favor to ask you." His tone was almost playful. "You must send your carriage home, and stay out here and keep me and Tad company."

Startled, she glanced up at him swiftly.

"Oh, I can't, Mr. President, I really can't. I am one of the night nurses in the Circle Hospital now, you know. And I have telegraphed father about Jack. I am sure he will come on at once."

"Mrs. Lincoln is out of spirits again, Laurie, and it makes me and Tad sad to know that she is grieving for little Willie and we can do nothing to cheer her. You are the only one who can cheer her up, my dear child."

So it was that Abraham Lincoln, to make the girl forget her own sorrow, put before her the sorrow of another, and Dorothy, innocently believing that his only object was to cheer his wife, put on a smiling face and exerted herself to comfort the bereaved woman.

The next morning, when she came down stairs, President Lincoln was in his study with his secretary.

"I have found the path out of the woods, Laurie, the way to release Jack from Libby Prison," he called to her. When she came into the room, he left his seat and placed a chair for her. "I never like to leave a crib of corn until I have husked it all out," he explained. "Last night I sat up talking with Halleck, trying to think of some way to get those two brave boys out of the hands of the rebels. We couldn't think of anything and finally I went to bed. It was no use; I couldn't get to sleep. I just lay awake, thrashing around in my mind for a road out of that woods. It was near daylight when it came

to me like a candle in a window on a dark night. The instant the thought flashed on my mind, I knew I had hit the nail on the head."

He drew his chair nearer hers and slouched forward, his elbows on his knees. Then he went on.

"In one of our recent cavalry fights, General W. H. F. Lee, a son of the Rebel Commander in Chief, was captured. He is in Fortress Monroe. I have ordered that he and another rebel prisoner of war, not below the rank of captain, be placed in close confinement under guard, and that the rebel agent for the exchange of prisoners be notified that they will be hanged immediately on our receiving authoritative information of the execution of our two boys. Don't you think that will fotch 'em?" he asked.

"Oh, Mr. President," she faltered. "I am sure it will. They will never allow a son of General Lee to be killed. You have saved Jack, and I —"

That afternoon when she tried to apologize for her tears, President Lincoln laughed.

"Never mind, my dear," he said. "I expected you to cry. Why, I shouldn't know what to make of a woman, if she didn't cry when she got the thing she had set her heart on."

Later in the week he was leaving the War Department when he met Dorothy going to the Circle Hospital. He took a letter from the crown of his hat and handed it to her. It was the formal reply of Colonel Ludlow, agent for the exchange of prisoners at Fortress Monroe, and he gave the name of the Confederate officer selected to be held with General Lee as hostage for the two Federal officers.

"Oh — oh," was all that Dorothy said, as she stared at the name on the written page, but she turned so deathly white that the President put out his hands, fearing she would faint.

The incident stuck in his mind and worried him. That afternoon, while out driving with his wife, he told her of it. He said it puzzled him and made him doubt his ability to understand the girl at all.

"What was the rebel officer's name?" was Mrs. Lincoln's prompt question.

"Why, let me see," he replied thoughtfully. Then he took off his high hat and gave his hair an extra tousle. "His name was Hamilton, Colonel David Hamilton."

"Hm! " said Mrs. Lincoln. "I don't wonder she acted queerly. That is the man who refused to marry her."

CHAPTER X

THE VANITY FAIR OF THE CONFEDERACY

"OF course I was speaking only as your cousin," Jack apologized.

"I have no relatives in the Northern army," Margaret replied coldly, keeping her eyes fastened on her flashing knitting needles. "When you took up arms against the South that wiped out every tie — any relationship that may previously have existed."

"Then you would like me to address you as Miss Beverly?"

"I should prefer it." Margaret glanced up cheerfully acquiescent.

Jack made a brave effort to smile but there was precious little mirth in his pale face. They were seated on the front piazza of the roomy old-fashioned house, which Mrs. Beverly — thanks to the judgment of Alec Stephens — had purchased on her arrival in Richmond, immediately after the beginning of hostilities. She had paid a generous price, as prices went at that time, but now the former owner, passing it daily, eyed it resentfully. Not only would it bring twenty times the amount he had received but he shrewdly calculated the snug income it would produce, renting rooms to refugees. As it was, Mrs. Beverly not only had a comfortable home for her family but a resting place for a long succession of wounded and convalescent soldiers, struggling back to health before returning to the front.

The old house was in a turmoil of preparation. The day before, a car, loaded with all the good things produced on a fertile Georgia plantation, had arrived in Richmond, consigned to Mrs. Beverly. It cost a mint of money but it had come straight through; and every

article, including the eggs and butter packed in jars of strong brine, was as good as when it started from Richmond County. That morning the people in the streets cheered at the unexpected appearance of General Jeb Stuart and a handful of his young cavalrymen. Among them was Captain Twiggs Beverly. Straightway Margaret declared she would give them a party and preparations began.

Six weeks earlier an attack of typhoid fever, supplemented by Margaret's eloquent appeal to the President of the Confederacy, had freed Jack from Libby Prison. He was convalescent now and his exchange practically assured. As he sat on the piazza, watching his cousin's busy fingers — they were always busy now — a mighty longing was tugging at his heart, a longing to take her back to Washington as his wife. It was not encouraging, just at this particular moment, to be commanded to call her Miss Beverly. Twiggs stepped through a French window from his mother's sitting-room and joined them.

"What has become of Laurie?" he asked, as he seated himself on the banisters. His left arm was in a sling and a wide scar from a freshly healed sabre cut was plainly visible on one side of his closely cropped head.

"She has gone in the kitchen to help mammy beat eggs for the cakes," his sister answered, and she pursed her lips and glanced sideways at Jack, as though resenting that his presence had prevented her from following. "She ran David off; then she left."

"David!" Twiggs exclaimed.

"Yes. He was passing and came up to say good-by. He can't come to the party, he's leaving for the front to-night. And Laurie was so charmed to see him!" Margaret tossed her head. "I never saw her so charmed before. I think she must have learned it in Paris. And David — why, David stuttered and stammered — said he didn't know she was here and Laurie apologized for not having sent him her card. Imagine any one sending cards in Richmond *now!* David fled."

"It's lucky I was not out here. I might have for-

gotten he was in my own house and helped the scoundrel along with the toe of my boot," Twiggs growled.

"Kicked David out of the house!" Margaret's eyes were beyond description.

"What is the difficulty between you and David, Twiggs?" Jack asked, eyeing his cousin disapprovingly.

"Difficulty!" Twiggs snapped. Then the whole story came tumbling out, just as he had heard it from Dorothy, and he told how she had kept David's letter and why he had destroyed it.

"How mean of Laurie!" Margaret exclaimed reproachfully. "She never told me a word about it. I'll never forgive her — never."

For once Jack was unconscious of her presence, he was gazing fixedly at Twiggs.

"You say it happened the day I discovered that Dorothy was my sister?" he asked.

"Yes, that morning. Mrs. Lincoln had just carried Laurie off to the White House and Mr. Herrick was at home trying to soothe his wife, when you called."

Jack dropped back in his chair and covered his eyes with his hand. For a moment he did some pretty hard thinking. He recalled David's delight at meeting him, his change of manner that night, and the next morning his change of plans.

"Yes, that must have been his reason," he murmured reflectively, unconscious that his eyes were fastened on Twiggs.

"If it is your New England blood that enables you coolly to sit still and moralize, when you are told how a scoundrel insulted your only sister, then I'm thankful there is none of it in my veins," Twiggs burst forth.

Jack paid no attention to his taunt. He left his seat and, going to the back door, called Dorothy from the kitchen.

When she came, he slipped his arm around her and looked down earnestly into her upturned, questioning face.

"If you had told me about your — misunderstanding

with David, I might have saved you both a great deal of pain, dear," he said.

Dorothy's lashes fell, and she hid her face on his shoulder with the cuddling movement that Twiggs remembered her using towards Mrs. Herrick when she was a child.

"You didn't know that it was David who told me who you were and sent me to Mr. Herrick to confirm his story."

"David!" This time Twiggs' exclamation was incredulous.

Dorothy looked wonderingly up at her brother.

"Yes, I showed him our mother's miniature and told him of her disappearance. The next morning he gave me a letter which he said he had written for fear of not seeing me. He had changed his plans during the night and was leaving at once. He particularly asked me not to tell Mr. Herrick that I had received the information from him."

Dorothy was still listening breathlessly.

"Don't you understand, dear," Jack went on. "David realized the change in your position and wished you to be free to choose for yourself. He was too honorable to hold you to your promise to marry him, and too considerate to leave it for you to decide."

He stopped, waiting for her to speak, but Dorothy only held down her head.

"Shall I send for David, dear?" Jack asked very gently.

Instantly Dorothy drew away from him. Her cheeks were crimson and she flashed a glance at Twiggs.

"No," she answered. "He didn't trust me. I'll not have anything to do with a man who can't trust me." And she left the piazza with her chin in the air.

"She's right," asserted Margaret. "Laurie's right. You men treat us like harmless imbeciles and then are surprised when we don't read your innermost thoughts." She also walked into the house, holding her head high.

Jack looked after them and shook his head.

"They're all just alike," he murmured. "I don't

believe Adam understood Eve a bit better than we do those two." Twiggs was going down the front steps and he called to him. "You were telling me that you were the first Confederate captain selected at Fortress Monroe to be imprisoned with General Lee."

"Yes," Twiggs answered. "The selection was made pretty much as it was at Libby. I drew the death prize. I was put in a casement room next to that in which General Lee was confined. We were both under guard. The next morning I was taken out. Of course the guards could give me no information but I knew at once that it was through your father's influence."

"No," said Jack. "It was David. He offered himself in your place. He said that he had no ties, while you had a widowed mother, a sister and a sweetheart. I have a letter here from the commandant. We were together, you know, in the peninsular campaign."

Twiggs took the letter, read it through and handed it back without a word. He passed on down the steps and turned into the street. When he reached the humble lodgings occupied by the Vice-President of the Confederacy, the door of the front room was ajar. He pushed it open and stepped in. Colonel David Hamilton was seated before the window, sewing a button on his trousers. Twiggs stopped for a moment, taking in his intent face and awkward efforts.

"Great gee," he cried, bursting into a laugh. "You look about as graceful as you would dressing a baby."

David looked up, then rose stiffly to his feet. Twiggs extended his hand.

"I've come to apologize, David, and give you leave to knock me down. But why in the devil didn't you tell me the truth about Laurie? You let me think that she threw you over. When she told me the truth — well, that blow in the face before General Lee's tent at Gettysburg told you how I felt about it."

"I thought that was it," David replied, and he grasped his friend's hand as cordially and with his heart as free from revenge, as he had done when as boys they had quarreled and made up.

"And there's another thing." Now Twiggs' face grew serious. "Jack received a letter from the Commandant of Monroe, telling how you gave yourself up in my place — to be hanged. I shall have to tell mother of that, David, and let her thank you. I'm not much of a son, but I'm all she's got and —"

David put up his hand and stopped him.

"No, you must not," he said. "That is one thing you must not tell your mother. Any other man would have done the same thing in my place; you would have done it for me."

Twiggs laughed.

"If I did, it would go mightily against the grain. There isn't a man in the country who enjoys this war any more than I do. You told that Yankee colonel that I had a sweetheart. You should have said half a hundred. Every pretty girl in the Confederacy and cavalryman's toll, that's the life for me!"

Never had Twiggs appeared handsomer or more winning to David. As he watched him and listened to his careless talk, there crept into his mind the conviction that both he and Margaret had been mistaken in fancying him in love with Dorothy. His resentment towards him at Gettysburg was the natural outcome of family pride, his chivalric protection of a kinswoman. As Twiggs was leaving, he referred to Margaret's party.

"You'd better come," he urged. "Mother is going to give us a regular old-fashioned Georgia hot supper. Jeb Stuart starts for the front at daylight and she wants us to have a good meal before we leave. Margaret and Laurie are both keeping a dance for you, I know. You had better not disappoint them."

So it happened that in less than an hour after assuring Mr. Stephens that it would be impossible for him to go to Margaret's party David changed his mind. The military band on the back piazza was playing when he arrived, and, though it was still early, the spacious old house seemed already filled with a numerous overflow of young people promenading on the piazzas and along the brick paved walks of the front garden.

The two girls stood in the front drawing-room, receiving with Mrs. Beverly, when David entered. Dorothy, taken off her guard, greeted him with a quick glance of pleased surprise that made him want to fall on his knees to her there and then.

It was a bright, beautiful scene, for there were heroes to be cheered, heroes who would march away at the crack of dawn, perhaps never more to return. The women put away from their minds the remembrance of wounds they had dressed in their morning visit to the hospitals, smiled and devoted themselves to entertaining. To Dorothy, fresh from the fashions of Paris and New York, it looked as if all the old trunks in the Confederacy had been ransacked to supply the raiment for the ladies. It was quite evident that both damask and lace curtains had been utilized, and two pretty girls, sisters, took great pride in proclaiming their costumes a combination of their mother's piano cover and their grandmother's wedding veil, pieced out with the top of an old blue silk umbrella. The men were just as bad. A garment was a garment in those days in the Confederacy, regardless of style, color or material. Whether it was one's own or loaned by a generous friend, it was accepted with gratitude and worn without criticism.

Everybody who was anybody in Richmond was there. David and Jack, standing together against the wall, watched President Davis as he greeted Margaret and was presented to Dorothy. Well-groomed and dignified, a certain gracious courtesy characterized his manner when away from the cares of his position, which was very charming. Mrs. Davis was with him, and in spite of her simple dress Jack pronounced her the handsomest woman in the room. Secretary Seddon came after the President and his lady, and he was shouldered out of place by the most popular member of the Confederate cabinet, bluff old Secretary Mallory. Next in line was Vice-President Stephens with General Bob Toombs.

Then there was a stir among the ladies. A group of young cavalry officers made their appearance in the door with Jeb Stuart in the lead.

"He's Beauty Stuart still," Jack remarked. "He's always the handsomest man in the room."

"Not when Decatur Fulton was present," David replied, and his mind went back to the three days' fight on the hills around Gettysburg and his friend's unclaimed body in an unmarked grave.

"Who is that tall fellow talking to Twiggs?" Jack asked.

David looked and saw that the cavalryman had his eyes fastened on Margaret. He smiled as he replied,

"Baron von Boerck, citizen of Germany and volunteer aid to Jeb Stuart."

Now there was a stir indeed. Closely following Stuart and his dashing cavaliers came the man who was, for the time being, the most talked of man in the South, General John Morgan. He had only recently escaped from a penitentiary in Ohio, where the Federal authorities had shaved his head as a common felon.

As Twiggs came across the room and joined them, Jack said:

"I hope Beauregard will be here this evening. I have always wanted to see Beauregard."

His cousin shook his head.

"You'll never see him in Richmond. After the battle of Bull Run Beauregard swore that he would never shake hands with Mr. Davis. He asserts that the President not only forbade him to pursue the enemy to Washington but sent a telegram to Richmond claiming the victory as his own. He says he doesn't want to cause a scandal, so he keeps away from Richmond."

"Ah, so you have dissensions and jealousy in your army, as well as we," Jack exclaimed.

Twiggs gave him a quick glance; then laughed.

"Shucks," he answered. "I forgot you were a Yankee and wouldn't understand the joke. Beauregard and Davis are devoted — like twin brothers. Beauregard is not in Richmond because he is getting ready to sack Washington. There they go," he added, motioning towards the door of the supper-room. The portières were drawn aside, and President Davis and Mrs. Beverly

entered. "The dignitaries are going to supper, and I am instructed to start the dancing and keep the children amused until their turn comes. Jack, the doctor ordered you to keep still. Come, David, get a partner and help me out."

As David started across the room, Dorothy was whirled away by General J. E. B. Stuart and Margaret followed in the arms of his tall German aid. Later in the evening Jack persuaded "Miss Beverly" to go for a promenade with him on the piazza, and Dorothy said her next dance had been promised to Colonel Hamilton. It was at the end of this dance that David made his great mistake.

As the music stopped, they stepped into the recess of the deep bay-window. David bent down and was fanning her.

"Dearest, won't you forgive me," he pleaded, and his very soul was in his eyes. "It was like the tortures of the damned; but I couldn't come. I wanted you to be free — to see other men." Dorothy turned towards him and half put out her hand. David stumbled blindly on. "Twiggs told me this morning that Jack had explained to you, that you are not angry."

Dorothy stood up.

"Angry! Why, how could you ever have fancied me so unappreciative, Colonel Hamilton?" Her voice was as cool and sweet as a spring breeze. "I shall never cease to be grateful to you for taking the initiative, for breaking off our silly, childish affair."

Twiggs was passing. She stepped from behind the curtain and took his arm.

"I was afraid you had forgotten me," she told him. Then she turned back towards David. "I am so glad to have met you again, Colonel Hamilton. I always enjoy meeting old friends."

CHAPTER XI

WHEN RICHMOND FELL

THAT last day's fight at Gettysburg made Pickett's division immortal and sealed the fate of Lee's army. Throughout the South the dismay produced by the news was well nigh overpowering. By that one blow hope for a speedy peace was crushed and the clouds, banked on the horizon of their future, changed from rose-tinted to black. On the same day the surrender of Vicksburg to Grant was announced; a few days more and Port Hudson had fallen. The turning point of the war had passed. The Union Army had at last developed a great military genius.

As a blacksmith, welding fused metal on his anvil, tests his tools, so Abraham Lincoln tried, one by one, the generals of the Northern army, and again, like a blacksmith, when he found them unsuited to the work he cast each aside and picked up another. Now he laid his hand on Grant.

We all know what followed — how Grant and the ablest of his lieutenants crushed out the life of the Southern Confederacy. It is not easy for a Southerner and a Georgian to admit that Sherman was one of the greatest of our generals, but this is the story of the welding of our Nation, not of the sufferings of a state. Sherman it was, who looked and saw the Southern Confederacy stretched like a gaunt gray eagle over the southern States. He understood, he selected its vital spot, then he struck. When he devastated Georgia he broke the backbone of the Confederacy. It remained only to pull out the gray eagle's claws. Grant did that.

All through those bloody days of '65, when one hundred and thirty thousand famished, shivering Con-

federates struggled against Grant's millions of soldiers, David fought with Lee, and Colonel Jack Clinton was aid to the General-in-Chief of the Union forces.

In February the Hampton Roads conference failed; the last chance for the South to receive payment for the slaves was thrown away, the last hope of an advantageous peace abandoned. Soon after this Mr. Stephens tried to persuade Mrs. Beverly and Margaret to accompany him back to Georgia. Jeb Stuart was dead and Twiggs now rode with the cavalry of Fitzhugh Lee. His mother and sister refused to leave Richmond.

Every day Grant's grip on the Confederate Capital tightened. Every day his army moved a step nearer, hammering down Lee's tattered followers — they were Lee's followers now. All hope of Southern independence had vanished, but, starving and broken-down, they still followed their beloved commander until the end came and he bade them go home.

On the first day of April the beginning of that end came in the battle of Five Forks. The next day dawned fair and cloudless on the doomed city, its last sunrise as the Capital of the Southern Confederacy. Mrs. Beverly and Margaret did their usual morning work in the hospitals, then took their places in St. Paul's church.

Ah, let us pray that our country shall never again see such a picture of woe as that service presented. The body of the church was black and gloomy with mourning, relieved but slightly by the gray uniforms of the military. The black bonnets of the ladies contrasted sharply with the bandaged heads of the men, whose pale and wan faces lately rested on the pillows of a hospital couch. There was the attentive care of the young girls, seeking out in the prayer-book the places in the service for soldiers whose maimed arms lay helpless, and spaces were left among the standing throng, showing where some poor fellow with wounded or amputated leg was compelled to keep his seat. In the solemn pauses of the prayer sounded the dull reverberation of distant cannon.

It was like the meeting of one vast family for a funeral. There was a hushed solemnity in the movement of all,

a dead quiet that denoted the crushed feeling of those who came to pray. The priest was reading the Litany:

"From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death —"

The response came, a solemn chorus of fervent entreaty:

"Good Lord, deliver us!"

A messenger passed swiftly and silently up the long aisle. He stopped at the President's pew. Mr. Davis rose instantly and passed quietly out of the church. Two gentlemen nearer the pulpit left their seats and followed him, and the congregation, feeling themselves in the presence of some great calamity, streamed after them. In the streets they all learned the news.

"General Lee has telegraphed the President that the enemy has broken through our lines," a gentleman, who had come directly from the War Department, told Mrs. Beverly and Margaret. "Our army will have to retire farther south. Lee says Richmond must be evacuated to-night."

The streets were thronged. Men collected on the sidewalks and at the corners to ask questions or plan with one another the escape of their families, and ladies stood in the doors or on the steps of their homes, their faces bathed in tears of anguish and disappointment. In front of Mrs. Beverly's house there was standing a strange looking vehicle — a high spring wagon with a low curving top like an over-grown sunbonnet. It was drawn by a spike team, two mouse-colored mules led by a clay-bank horse. Both ladies stared at it curiously. Their tears ceased to flow. Then Margaret uttered a glad cry and ran forward.

"It is Anno Domini. I know it is Anno Domini, and this is Hecate's last colt."

And Anno Domini it was. She met them in the middle of the hall and took them both in her arms and let them weep out their first burst of sorrow on her broad bosom, comforting them as though they were children.

"Oh, Anno, don't you think General Lee will drive

the Yankees back?" Margaret sobbed. "Don't you believe — ?"

"Honey," — the seriousness of Mrs. Marschalk's voice amounted to solemnity — "Honey, I ain't had no hope for our cause — not sence I went t' Andersonville."

"Andersonville?" Mrs. Beverly and Margaret repeated the name as though it were new to them.

"That prison they put down thar in Georgy. They call it a prison but it want nothin' but a big pen made out o' pine logs. Thar wasn't a sign of a kiver to it an' rain or shine, sick or well, them thar Yanks had t' stay in it."

"I thought it was in Southern Georgia, Anno," Mrs. Beverly said, and her manner was almost timid. "How did you happen to see it?"

"It was his sister's son — the sister what married another Dutchman an' settled in Pennsylvany. Her oldest boy run away an' jined the Yanks. Fust thing we knew, Sary landed in Augusty an' Hans King hauled her out t' our house. Oh, she paid him good an' plenty — twenty greenback dollars t' set in the tail of his watermillion cyart from the Lower Market t' the head of our lane. Thar's whar he put her out, an' she had t' hoof it the rest of the way. Well, she said our soldiers had taken her boy prisoner an' sent him t' Andersonville, then she began t' blubber. I knew thar wasn't but one thing for me t' do. I jest hitched up that thar team you seen thar at yo' front gate an' she tumbled in. We was drivin' nigh onto two weeks befo' we got sight o' the place."

Here she put up both gaunt knotted hands to smooth back her hair and for the first time Mrs. Beverly saw that it was as white as driven snow. Anno Domini went on.

"The good Lord keep me from ever seein' sech a sight agin. Thousands o' men were herded in that thar pen an' treated like wild beasts. It was a Sunday when we got thar — an' it was like a Sunday in hell." She put one hand over her eyes as though to shut out the sight.

After a moment she went on more calmly. "I knowed that day the South warn't a-goin' to whip."

They had taken their seats in the hall and Anno Domini bent forward to Mrs. Beverly and asked:

"Ef it hadn't been for Andersonville, do you think the Lord would've put it in Sherman's head to march through Georgy?" She shook her head in answer to her own question. "An' sence then — the newspapers say we have had great vict'ries, but I've noticed it was our soldiers who had t' move an' let the Yanks have the field. The Lord's been a-fightin', but sence Andersonville he hain't fit for the South. Our Government meted out to them Yankee prisoners misery an' starvation. Sherman measured back to the women an' children of Georgy the fire and the sword."

"But, Anno Domini, the Confederate Government couldn't feed the prisoners." Mrs. Beverly's tone was passionate remonstrance. "Our soldiers in the field were starving. In Richmond flour has been selling for fifteen hundred dollars a barrel. It was not the Government's fault. We couldn't get food for our own men in the field; how could we have food for the prisoners?"

"Why didn't they turn 'em lose, then? We do as much for brute beasts. — When we can't feed 'em, we turn 'em out to root for theyselves. Thar ain't no disputin' the fact — that thar prison pen at Andersonville proved t' the Lord that the Confederates wan't fitten to manage no country, so he threw all his favor on the Yanks' side. To-morrow the Yanks air a-comin' t' take this strong'old, an' Davie Hamilton sarnt me t' make you-all git out."

"David! Oh, Anno, have you seen David? Did you see — ?"

There Margaret stopped, afraid to finish the question, the answer to which both her own and her mother's heart were crying to hear. Mrs. Marschalk understood and spoke at once.

"Yes, I seed Davie, an' I'd a-gone t' look for Twiggs but David said he had seen 'im the night befo' an' he was all right — that he was a-lookin' as fine as a fiddle an'

had riz to be a colonel. That satisfied me, so I jes' come on t' help git you-all out the way o' them Yanks. Whar's yo' niggers?"

"The servants?" Mrs. Beverly glanced around puzzled. For the first time she noticed the unusual absence of the slaves of her household. "Why, they they must all be in the kitchen." She turned to Margaret. "Go, my dear, and call Cæsar. Tell him that Mrs. Marschalk is here and send him to take her vehicle."

"They ain't in the kitchen — none of 'em ain't," Anno Domini asserted positively. "I found that thar front do' sprawlin' wide open an' I sarched from garret to cellar. I never seen nary hair ner hide of no nigger. Thar ain't no use fer ye t' look further. I know in reason they've all gone over t' the Yanks, jest like they done when Sherman come a-marchin' through Georgy."

Her surmise proved correct. In some mysterious way the slaves in Richmond had learned of the approaching evacuation, and all belonging to Mrs. Beverly, even Mammy, to save themselves from being returned to the South, had fled across the lines and joined the Union forces.

As the afternoon wore on, the excitement in the Confederate Capital increased. Wagons, carriages, vehicles of every description, laden with fugitives and their hastily collected treasures, were rumbling through the streets; horsemen and soldiers were dashing to and fro. Mrs. Peter Marschalk was in her element. There was responsibility to be assumed and she took it on her own shoulders; there was work to do and she did it.

Her first move was to arouse and feed the tired grandchild, Mattie's seven year old son, who had accompanied her on her jaunt from Georgia. Then she proceded to follow David's directions to get Mrs. Beverly and Margaret out of the path of the Union army. While they were collecting their valuables and a few clothes, she cooked what little food she could rake and scrape together, and went about setting the house in order generally. When she was at her busiest, hiding a silver

tea service in an opening she had made in the back of a fireplace, Mrs. Beverly remembered her manners.

"Why, Anno," she exclaimed. "You haven't told me about your family. How is Peter?"

"'Bout as well as a one-legged man kin be, I reckon." And Mrs. Peter Marschalk continued her work.

"One-legged man! Oh, Anno, has Peter lost a limb?"

"Yes, jest below the knee. I'm thankful for that too. He kin crook it, ye know, when he sets down to the table. It don't have t' stick straight out an' have me a-trippin' over it. Gin'ral Sherman shot it off. With the same cannon ball he shot off Judge Courtney's arm an' blew out his eye."

"Sherman shot off Judge Courtney's arm and blew out his eye!" For a moment Mrs. Beverly and Margaret forgot the fate of Richmond.

"Yes, in the siege of Savanny. The Judge was the Cap'in of the Richmond County Preserves an' He was one of his lieutenants. Now Alys, Henry Courtney's daughter, is a-goin' t' marry one o' Sherman's men."

"Marry a Yankee! After they killed her father, wounded her grandfather, burnt their cotton and set all their negroes free?"

Anno Domini sat back on her heels and looked at Margaret.

"Honey," she replied, and she spoke as one who has had wide experience, "a good man is a good man whether he is Yank or Rebel — he'll bless a woman's life. But a bad man — it don't matter if he's son of the Queen of Sheby. He be a misery and a torment."

By nightfall the dismay of the citizens of Richmond became terror. Bands of drunken ruffians began to riot, pillage and burn. Mrs. Marschalk shut her three charges indoors and, taking her stand at the front gate, demanded news from the few soldiers and police as they hurried past. Near midnight she re-entered the house and told the two anxious ladies:

"I stopped an officer goin' pass jest now. He said Jeff Davis had got off with his Cabinet — he seen the steam-cyars draw out." She turned to Margaret. "That

officer said his name was Mayo — Cap'n Mayo. He said fer me t' tell you that he had his eyes on this house, an' everything was perfectly safe. I told 'im that seein' was believin'. When I seed all them murderers an' robbers shet up in jail or strung on a telegraph pole I mought lose my worst suspicions agin 'em." And a flicker of a smile broke over her face at the recollection of the expression of the officer's face.

"Anno, dear," Mrs. Beverly said, later in the night, as they sat waiting for daylight and listening to the pandemonium that reigned without. "You told me about Peter and Mattie's little family, but you didn't say what brought you up here. Surely you had some special reason for driving all the way up here from Georgia."

Mrs. Marschalk's face softened. One long arm swept out towards the northwest.

"I'm on my way to Bull Run and Gettysburg. I'm goin' fer my boy — Little Dutchy — " she pronounced the name with infinite tenderness, — "an' fer Decatur Fulton."

Margaret threw her arms about her mother and buried her face on her shoulder. Mrs. Beverly understood, and her eyes were streaming with tears when she explained to Anno Domini.

"Margaret went to Gettysburg," she said, stroking the girl's bowed head. "Ruth had written imploring us to try to find Decatur. It was months after the battle — after Jack's recovery, but Margaret would go. Brother Clinton took her, and Dorothy went with them. They searched for days but could find no trace. You know Decatur was never reported killed or wounded, — only missing. Nobody saw him fall and there was no time to search for him after the battle, — our army left so hurriedly."

"I know," Anno bobbed her head in acquiescence. "At Bull Run the Yanks got in a hurry; after Gettysburg our movements were pretty swift. Well, I've knowed Decatur Fulton ever sence the hour he came into this world, an' ef huntin' will find 'im he's goin' to be found an' took back home to — "

Mrs. Marschalk never finished that sentence. A loud explosion, like the crashing together of worlds, rent the night, drowning even the noises of the drunken mob. Nine times it came, and the very earth itself seemed to rock and tremble with the shock. The unfinished ships in the harbor were being blown up to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Union forces. Next the magazines were fired, and the thousands of shells stored in them sent their iron spray far out into the city. Then the great warehouses, and in them too, among the bales of cotton and tobacco, loaded shell had been scattered to make the destruction more certain. Richmond and Manchester were blazing pandemoniums amid the silent blackness of the night.

At last that night of horror ended, but with the daylight fresh horrors came. The half-starved populace, free from restraint, rushed, a great mob, on the storehouses of the fleeing government, burst them open and fought like famished dogs for the food; and the people, made homeless by the spreading flames, huddled in Capitol Square, watching the blue soldiers march in at the northern end of the city while the gray men passed out on the south.

Thus it happened that Margaret drove out of Richmond behind Anno Domini's spike-team at one end of the city, while Jack rode in at the other.

CHAPTER XII

APPOMATTOX, THE WORD ENGRAVEN ON THE SOUTHERN HEART

"MISSIS had er ole black hen, — "
Colonel David Hamilton sprang to his feet. The singer continued,

> "Spiteful as er hornet,
> Settin' in the chicken-house,
> Scratchin' an' er hol'rin', hol'rin',
> Scratchin' an' er hol'rin'."

The song ended as Colonel Twiggs Beverly rode leisurely up to the campfire, in an orchard a few miles from Appomattox, around which sat Colonel Hamilton and a group of brother officers.

It was the fifth night after the evacuation of the Confederate Capital. General Lee was holding his last council of war with Generals Longstreet, Gordon and Fitzhugh Lee in attendance. Neither the conversation nor the thoughts of the officers, waiting within a stone's throw of the consulting generals, had been cheerful, but on Colonel Beverly's appearance every man greeted him with a subdued laugh or a broad grin. He sprang from his horse, tossed his reins to his orderly, then began complacently to straighten his new uniform and prink up generally. He was for all the world like a state militiaman, making ready for a dress parade.

"Where on earth are you going?" David asked, and there was a sparkle of admiration as well as a shadow of a smile in his eyes, as he watched his friend.

"Going!" — Twiggs looked up innocently — "why, to see the girls in North Carolina, of course."

"Do you think we shall fight in the morning?" The question came as a chorus from the group of officers.

"Fight! We'll fight until we break through that damned Yankee line, and we won't wait until to-morrow to begin," Twiggs replied emphatically.

"How do you know? What have you heard?" the chorus asked.

"I've heard nothing more than you have and I *know* nothing, but I've passed through New England once or twice and I learned how to guess. If burning baggage trains and limiting an officer's wardrobe to the clothes he wears on his back don't mean fight and a quick march to Johnston, then I'll go back to New England and renew my studies," Colonel Beverly answered, then he lifted his hand. "They're breaking up," he said, motioning towards the generals. "Now you can all go and hear my prophecy fulfilled."

As the group broke to pieces, each officer going forward to join his corps commander, Twiggs drew David aside.

"Old man," he said. "I want you to promise me that when Lee surrenders — he must surrender in a few days, you know, and that ends the war — when he surrenders, I want you to promise me that you will go to Washington and get Dorothy."

David stared at him. He was standing full in the moonlight. His cap was on the back of his head and a line of soft brown curls fringed his brow, making his lean, clean shaven face look more youthful than ever. He was like a marvellously handsome boy, and David noticed his brilliant eyes and his happy, care-free smile.

"You thought she cared for me," Twiggs went on. "I saw it in your eyes that night at Margaret's party. When you were gone, I asked her." His face sobered a little. "She broke down and cried. She told me that every moment of her life, since she was old enough to remember, she had loved you and only you. I know she sent you about your business that night — the minute before she took my arm — I saw it in both your faces. All girls are the same. They seem to take particular pleasure in wounding the fellow they care most for and

breaking their own hearts about it afterwards." He laid his hand on David's shoulder. "We are going to fight to-morrow, perhaps our last fight; and I want to make sure that you understand Laurie."

"What will you do?" David asked, and Twiggs knew that for once his acting had been too fine. He had not deceived his friend.

His face flushed and he began to bluster.

"That is none of your damned business," he declared. "You have only to think of Dorothy. A man may be willing to sacrifice his own happiness to his friend, but he has no right to sacrifice the happiness of the woman who loves him and whom he loves. Besides, you have no right to fancy —"

David slipped his arm over his shoulder, just as he had often when they were school boys together.

"Hush," he said. "You have done me the greatest kindness that one man can do another. If there is a battle to-morrow, we shall both fight — maybe for the last time. Don't let us have any hard words to-night."

There is no need to tell you what happened on that to-morrow — how Lee tried to cut his way through the solid blue lines of the Union army, and only one regiment of Fitzhugh Lee succeeded, — how Gordon sent to his Chief the historic reply: "Tell General Lee that I have fought my men to a frazzle and I fear I can do nothing, unless I am heavily supported by Longstreet's Corps."

When the message was delivered General Lee said: "Then there is nothing left for me to do but to go to see General Grant."

As for that meeting between Grant and Lee, Americans have learned it in their cradles; they will tell it to their grandchildren. The name Appomattox is graven on every Southern heart; it is one the North does not forget. Did you ever hear your mother try to fix a date? It was either before or after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Did you ever see your father shed tears? It was when he tried to describe the return of his great commander after the conference with Grant in the McLean house. Or if your father wore the blue, it was when he told you

how, following the example of his own great leader, he bared his head as the Southern chieftain, followed by his single attendant, rode sadly out of Appomattox Court House.

There were few eyes that were not wet that day, Union or Confederate.

Jack found David seated on a pile of rails under an apple tree, the spot where General Lee sat when he wrote his first letter to Grant that morning. Without a word Jack took his seat beside him and threw an arm over his shoulder.

"David," he said. "The last time I saw Dorothy she made me promise that when the end of the war came, I would hunt you up and bring you with me to Washington. She told me to tell you, that at the beginning of this war you left her because you loved her, now that the war is over she asks you to come back because she loves you."

"Did she say that?" David exclaimed. "Did she say that?"

They had both risen to their feet and Jack drew a letter from his pocket.

"That is what she told me when I was last in Washington. Here is what she wrote me last week. I received it this morning."

David read the letter.

"I don't deserve it! I don't deserve it!" he repeated, and there was a choke in his voice and he half turned away.

Jack brought his hand down hard on his shoulder.

"You do deserve it," he contradicted. "You do deserve it. You are the only man I ever knew who deserved a good woman, —" he hesitated, then added, — "and I am glad that woman is my sister."

The next day General Lee joined his family in Richmond, while General Grant and his staff set out for Washington. There was one Confederate officer in his party. There was no mistaking him. He still wore his gray uniform; it was all he had. Colonel Jack Clinton introduced him to his commander as,

"My friend, Colonel David Twiggs Hamilton."

CHAPTER XIII

THE DARKEST DAY IN THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY

THE way that Dorothy greeted David is historical. She met her brother at the door. When Jack had kissed her, he turned to greet his father. Dorothy held up her face and slipped her arms around David's neck, as though he had gone away the day before. There was no need for explanations between them; they both understood.

" Are you ready to marry me, dearest? " David asked.

She reached her hand up to his cheek.

" Yes, dear, as soon as Jack is mustered out. We must take him south with us." There were tears in her eyes, for they had told her that it was Twiggs' regiment that had cut its way through Sheridan's Corps, making a desperate dash to join Johnston.

Later she took him to call at the White House. She had promised President Lincoln.

It was the fourteenth day of April and Good Friday. Our country that night was filled with a deep and tranquil thankfulness. In the South there was disappointment mingled with joy, but the sting of defeat had been plucked out by the generous terms of the victorious general and the brotherly treatment of his troops. The peace so long sought and prayed for had come at last. Husbands, sons, and brothers were coming home. The sermons that day were full of gladness and the Misereres burst as Te Deums from the hearts of the people.

When Dorothy and David reached the White House, the President was holding a Cabinet meeting, that Cabinet meeting at which he said:

" No one need expect me to take any part in hanging

or killing the rebel leaders, even the worst of them. Frighten them out of the country, open the gates, let down the bars, scare them off!" And he threw up his hands as though scaring off sheep. "Enough lives have been sacrificed; we must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union."

He deprecated the disposition he had noticed in some quarters to hector and dictate to the people of the South, who were trying to right themselves. He did not wish the autonomy nor the individuality of the states destroyed. Such were the last words of the Welder of our Nation to his Cabinet.

When Dorothy and David were ushered into his study, he rose to meet them, holding out both hands to David.

"I'm glad to meet you, Colonel Hamilton," he said. "Just as glad to get you back — " he glanced at Dorothy — "just as glad to get you back as Laurie is."

David did not say much; his heart was too full. At last he understood Dorothy's and Jack's devotion to their Black Republican President and why, after his return from the Hampton Roads Conference, Alec Stephens had refused to make speeches abusing him.

As they were leaving, Mr. Lincoln took one of Dorothy's hands in his own and one of David's. He scanned their faces in a long, lingering look.

"You will cherish her, David," he said earnestly. "She is your gift of God — your gift of God."

That night Dorothy took her three men to the theatre. The play was "Our American Cousin," and she told her father that he, as well as their two soldiers, needed recreation and that a good comedy was the best thing. All the world knows what Dorothy saw that night at Ford's Theatre.

All eyes were fastened on the stage. There was a pistol shot, then the wail of a broken-hearted woman: "The President is shot! He has shot the President!"

It is one of the sweetest memories of David's life that in the awful moment that followed, in that first instant of terror, Dorothy, with her father and her brother beside her, turned to him. He held her firmly in his

arms until the first panic of fear had passed. Then he gave her to her father and he followed Jack to the President's box.

The night that Anno Domini spent in Richmond was dark but it covered only one city, perhaps a few states. The darkness that followed, when Booth's pistol ball went crashing into Abraham Lincoln's brain, covered a continent; it shadowed the lives of thirty millions of people. It startled the world. It wiped out the feeling of brotherly love in the Northern heart towards the South. The North believed it a far reaching conspiracy and the result was reconstruction, — the one injustice which the South has to complain of and the North has to regret.

To Dorothy that night was the summit of human misery. When the awful hours of darkness at last dragged themselves away and daylight came, the haggard faces of the people in the streets proclaimed only too plainly the latest news from the little house opposite Ford's Theatre. All Washington knew that the President was dying.

It was nearly eight o'clock when Dorothy saw Jack and David crossing Lafayette Square in the rain. Senator Clinton opened the door. There was no need for questions; father and daughter read the terrible tidings in their faces.

" Father," Jack said, when they all faced each other in the library, " I must go south. Nobody knows what has become of Twiggs. I must go south to Aunt Beverly and Margaret."

" Yes, dear," Dorothy answered, " and we will all go with you."

She turned and placed her hands on her father's and David's arms.

There is little more to tell, for the whole of Richmond County knows how the breach was healed between Margaret and Jack, and how they were married in Rosney Chapel, with David and Dorothy, on the first day of June after Appomattox.

The two old churches — the negro and the white — still stand side by side on the flat above Butler's creek. I thank God that time has softened the bitterness that sprang up between them in the trying days that followed. Though differing in color, the people are now friends, working together for the advancement of their common country, whose constitution, following the teachings of our Lord and Savior, proclaims all men free and equal.

THE END.

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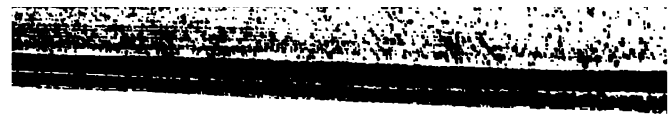

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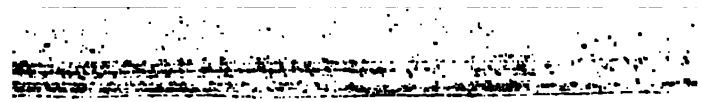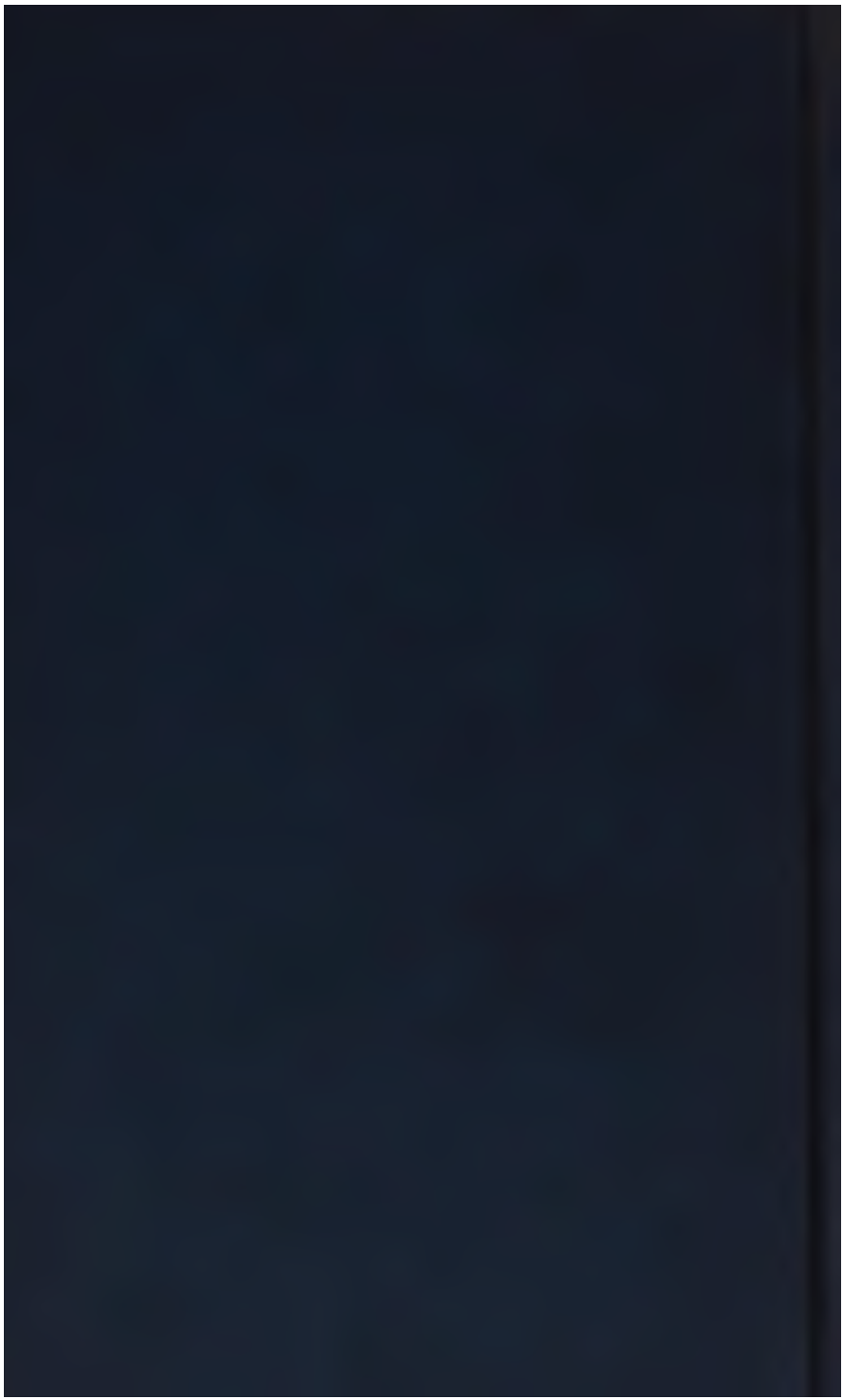
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